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SKETCHES OF SOUTH AMERICA.

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[Continued from page 185.]

PART III.—NO. II.

THE copper-colored race—which, in both Americas, amounts to not less than six millions—is a mysterious portion of the family of man. In seeking its origin the antiquary finds himself without even the dim light of fable, which sheds its faint and scattered beams on the infancy of most ancient nations that have long since been extinct. Nor is it less singular in the striking uniformity of its long-settled character. Though this race has existed in nearly two thousand tribes, which have been distinguished by hundreds of dissimilar languages, it has retained a surprising similarity in the great outlines of its physical and moral character. While its habits and manners are found to be modified to some extent by each particular tribe, there is an inflexibility, a steadfast perseverance, in what essentially characterizes the whole mass.

That the color of this people should vary so triflingly, though for centuries they have been spread from Hudson's Bay to the Straits of Magellan, is a problem not easy of solution. The strongest evidence has been urged, that the varying colors of the human race are directly referable to the powerful influence of climate. But these aborigines of the new world have existed through successive generations in every climate on the globe, and have retained almost the same complexion in the midst of the perpetual snows of the north, under the mild climate of the temperate zone, and under the glowing fervors of a vertical sun. Indeed, their color seems no longer subject to change by the influence of that element which painted them in their present hue. It is so connected with organic disposition, and has been transmitted unaltered through so many generations, that the same causes will doubtless continue to act in a uniform manner, and preclude all material change through ages to come.

The most observing travelers have likewise been struck with the almost perfect similarity of features found in the different families of these respective tribes. But this striking family-likeness is doubt-

less referable to the combined action of two very different causes—*local situation* and *mental inactivity*. The dissociating principles act so strongly on savages that the name of a river, a ridge of mountains, or a group of hills, forms an impassable limit to their friendly regards. Toward all beyond such narrow bounds the most implacable hatred is cherished, and the most bloody purposes are formed. The action of these principles has divided into hundreds of clans the ancient population of the American continent, and so effectually prevented intermarriages as that between many tribes they never occurred for centuries, but have been confined entirely within the narrow compass of each tribe respectively; and when these have been repeated through several successive ages, there becomes fixed a certain organic type, which may not improperly be entitled a “national equality of configuration.”

So entirely similar are the features of different persons in the same tribe, that they can only be discriminated by the most attentive observation. An insulated state has been observed to produce a like effect, but to a more limited extent, among the Jews in Europe, and the various castes in India. But, in proportion as men are raised in the scale of intelligence, this tendency is counteracted. Hence it rises into effect most fully where mind is the least elicited. That the improvement of intellect acts as a powerful instrument to diversify the expression of the countenance, none can be ignorant who has the least acquaintance with the power of mind to imprint its operations on the face. And as the countenance reflects the emotions of the soul in proportion as they are frequent, variable, and enduring, and not in proportion to the violence in which transient bursts may break forth, the strong feelings occasionally awakened in the savage breast, by a thirst of blood, could not be such a mental exercise as to give variety to the physiognomy. These savages seem almost totally void of that sensibility which brings the mind in contact with the external world, and multiplies our joys or sorrows in proportion to the number and strength of surrounding incentives. Living, as most of these tribes do, under the happiest climate on the globe, where spontaneous nature provides for most of their wants, they feel but feebly the usual causes of mental anxiety, or incentives to vigorous exertion. Thousands of them wishing no covering but the paint which smears them, and no food but the fruit of their forests, remain so dead to that bright circle of exciting objects which act on civilized man as never to be roused from the everlasting slumbers in which they repose. Thus that interesting variety of expression found in improved society—where mind is summoned forth by the voice of thrilling events, where hope and fear, with their kindred emotions, are vividly and permanently excited—can never be expected among these indolent natives, who seem almost as void of emotion as the earth on which they lounge.

Another fact, originating in the social state of these tribes, has arrested the attention of most travelers who have visited them: I allude to the singular circumstance, that scarcely an instance of deformity has been found among these children of nature. This has been most groundlessly ascribed to a favorable influence which savage life exerts in producing corporeal beauty and vigor. But the strongest evidences exist that it is entirely referable to other

causes. These causes are two, which, though no way kindred, exert a combined influence in securing the event.

The first we shall mention is the fact, that a deformed female was never known to be married in these tribes; for we are assured that no amount of wealth or family friendship ever induces an Indian to make a wife of *such* a female. Hereditary deformity among such a people is therefore never likely to exist, though it is by no means an unusual occurrence in civilized society.

A concurring cause with that we have mentioned is found in the cruelty of parents toward their deformed offspring, and the imminent peril to which barbarous life exposes infancy. Were the affection for offspring in savage parents strong and vivid as in the bosom of civilized man, still their infirm infants would be unequal to the hardships of their condition; and when to these inevitable exposures are added the wanton neglect of those who instrumentally gave them existence, and their intentional neglect of their deformed and sickly infants, it can occasion no astonishment that such seldom survive to reach manhood. That savage life is incomparably worse than civilized life, as adapted to the increase and vigor of the species, every fact connected with the subject which history transmits unequivocally demonstrates.

In this hasty sketch of Indian character, we must, at least, bestow a passing notice on the manners and customs of this mysterious people. As in South America the temperature of every climate on the globe is found, from the unmelting frosts of the pole to the burning sun of the equator, some variety would be expected in the manners and customs of its ancient inhabitants. Spread out as these aborigines are, from the summits of the snow-capped Andes to the burning shores of the Amazon, it is impossible that all should have adopted the same modes of living. Those on the lofty table-lands of the Cordilleras, who never feel the relaxing influence of a tropical sun, are more active, manly, and enterprising. They are distinguished by a love of liberty, and an energy of character, to which those in the plains could never be roused by all those great changes which have passed with whirlwind speed over the revolutionary republics around them.

But this race, as a whole, appears remarkably adapted to the variety of its local situation. It is perfectly at home whether on the frosty ridges of the mountains, on the marshy shores of the Orinoco, on the woodless plains of the La Plata, or amid the spicy groves of the Amazon. It appears equally contented where it depends on the precarious supplies yielded by the game taken in the chase on the high lands, where it feeds on the spontaneous fruits of the fields and forests on the plains, where it is entirely supported by fish taken from their streams, which swarm with millions of the finny tribes, and where it lives for a quarter of the year on mere *clay* during the overflowing of the Orinoco.

Nor does the history of pathology furnish a more singular fact than those involved in this last-mentioned mode of Indian subsistence. The facts in the case are, that several large tribes on the Orinoco, and especially the Otomacs, who live chiefly on fish for three-fourths of the year, subsist almost exclusively on *clay* during the other three months; that they neither suffer decay in health or

strength during that period; that they swallow three-fourths of a pound of clay daily, and that the sensation of hunger is as effectually removed by it as by ordinary food!* They select a very fine clay, taken from an alluvial stratum of the most unctuous earth, form it into small balls, and slightly harden them by the fire. These are found stacked together in small pyramids in their huts, and are taken without any farther preparation than being partially moistened in water. Though it is a matter of historical record that clay is used for food in Java, Guiana, New Caledonia, and in the Archipelago, yet no instance is mentioned in any of these places in which clay has been made the exclusive diet of human beings. This instance in South America is believed to stand alone, in which men have for months in succession subsisted on *clay alone*; and this is a pathological problem, a solution of which the writer is not aware has ever been furnished.

But, on whatever aliment these tribes subsist, in whatever pursuit they are engaged, or wheresoever their residence is located, *female* degradation, that never absent attendant of pagan life, is found to exist. Polygamy among the Indians in South America is almost universal; and that endless and frightful train of evils, inseparable from this violation of the law of nature and of God, is felt in all its blighting power in the savage state. Here the vilest passions of nature, which have never been curbed by the least restraint, are fanned into the most desolating flame. The Indian hut, which is sufficiently wretched from the want of every convenience, is rendered a thousand times more miserable by the mutual jealousies and boiling rancor of the fiend-like inmates.

But, exclusive of this fruitful source of female wo, of domestic strife, and of social confusion, the sufferings of every Indian wife are so intense as to be more easily conceived than described. She is an abject slave, and her husband a most consummate tyrant. So awfully are these women impressed with the overwhelming calamities of married life, that, when they speak of that state, they clothe their thoughts in the most expressive terms which their language affords. Of this, we may take a specimen from the doleful song in which the matrons address themselves to the bride on the day of her wedding:—"Ah, my daughter," say they, "what torments thou preparest for thyself! Hadst thou foreseen their terrible magnitude

* Humboldt observes, that some animals, like savage men, when pressed with hunger, swallow clay stones, and other hard substances. Instances of this may be found among wolves in the north-east of Europe, reindeer in higher latitudes, kids in Siberia, and crocodiles in Egypt and South America. In some of these have been found, on dissection, small blocks of wood, and large quantities of clay; and in the crocodile pieces of iron, and large stones, more than three inches in diameter. That these indigestible substances may remove the sensation of hunger may readily be conceived, as that is removed when food is taken into the stomach long before the process of digestion commences, or before the chyme is converted into chyle. Whether this is effected by the impression exerted by the aliment on the coats of the stomach, or by the digestive apparatus being filled with substances which excite the mucus membranes to an abundant secretion of gastric juice, and so remove the uneasy sensation of hunger; or whether it is referable to some other undiscovered process, may never be determined. But the fact has been sustained by too many experiments to leave room for doubt.

thou wouldst never have married. Ah, couldst thou believe that, in a married state, thou canst not pass a single moment without weeping tears of blood, thou wouldst have shrunk with horror from a condition so frightful!"

The history of every Indian wife shows that these startling descriptions of her wo are sober realities, and not rhetorical figures. The day of her nuptials is the last of her existence in which she has not to lament her unhappy lot. If the soil is cultivated, it is only by her diligence. The fields only produce as her hand tills them. If the crops are protected, she guards them. If the harvests are gathered, it must be by her labor; and while she toils under the drenching rains and burning suns, her husband lounges in the shade, smokes his tobacco, or quaffs his chicha.

These unfeeling barbarians use their wives alike for slaves in the field, and for beasts of burden to carry their loads. Nothing is more common than for the women to be seen bending under a load of corn or game, each with her infant fastened to her burden, and her stupid husband passing listlessly before her, without the weight of a feather to encumber him. And then, after she has prepared a meal of that which her own labor had procured, she must stand by trembling with dread of her lord's frown, and not be permitted to taste a morsel until he has finished his meal, and then only to satisfy the cravings of nature by the fragments he has left! Indeed, if her constant privations, her exhausting toils, and her unpitied sufferings, be all considered, death must appear a welcome refuge from the storms of a life so crowded with calamities. No enlightened mind can contemplate a picture of female degradation in a pagan state without feeling, immeasurably beyond the power of all words to express, how much the gospel has done in elevating the social destiny of that sex. Indeed, were we to grant the most shocking extravagances of infidelity, and concede that death is annihilation, and eternity but a dream, still we should, at the greatest sacrifices, send these unpitied sufferers the gospel; for it is the decision of all history, both of civilized and barbarous ages, that nothing below the revealed oracles of God can elevate woman to that lofty position from which she is formed to send out so kindly an influence.

Among the tribes of whose character we are drawing this sketch all other parts of domestic discipline are the legitimate result of that part which we have noticed. Parents have not the least control over their sons after the latter acquire muscular power sufficient to cope with their fathers; and it is impossible to conceive the disrespect, and even animosity, they evince for the paternal instrument of their existence. This want of respect, and feeling of hatred for their father, are the natural fruit of the heart-sickening manner in which his domestic relations are sustained.

That brute force by which those of the softer sex, the mother and wife, are subjected to slavery; and that entire want in the father of care and affection for his offspring—which should be the dearest parts of himself—could not but awaken in his sons the worst passions of nature. Over his daughters the father exercises the most absolute control, and never gives them in marriage without receiving from their intended husbands a stipulated compensation.

The marriage ceremonies among these tribes are totally uncon-

nected with religious rites. The means of celebrating them are furnished by the female attendants; the men who assemble on the occasion bring with them materials for the erection of a hut for the newly-connected pair. This ceremony, like most other occasions which convoke the Indians, never closes without a delirious dance and beastly drunkenness.

It is not unusual that females among those tribes within the tropics become mothers before they reach their thirteenth year. But where nature is so rapid in her approaches to maturity, she is no less so in her advances toward decay and dissolution. Where youth reaches manhood with so much greater speed than in higher latitudes, the entire race of life is proportionally abbreviated. This precocity is strikingly observable on the banks of the Oronoco, and is not prevented by those poisonous marshes which distinguish a section of its shores.

Indeed, there are no local circumstances which appear armed with sufficient power to affect materially the health or social condition of this mysterious people. To collect all the striking facts in their history illustrative of this statement would swell these pages to a volume. As a specimen of many, one, however, must be adduced. To avoid the mighty sweep of the waters of the Oronoco, which annually overflow a vast level on its banks, a large tribe, amounting to nearly ten thousand, *build their houses on the branches of trees*. These aerial habitations are located more than twenty feet above the highest point to which the periodical inundations arise. This places them above the miasmata generated by the retiring waters, which could not long be inhaled without destroying all human life. These inhabitants of the air prepare their residences on a group of *mangrove trees*, by weaving and twisting together their branches for a floor, and constructing the roofs of the broad leaves of the same trees. And while the temporary sea overwhelms the plains, they subsist on the medullary flower—which is the true *sago* of South America—of the same tree. Thus one season of the year they have beneath them an ocean of water, and during another a cloud of the most deathly vapours; yet, in defiance of these combined hostile influences, these children of the forest enjoy health, and increase in their number.

There are also numerous tribes, near the equator, which wear no clothes at any season of the year. While this indicates how deeply they have sunk into degradation, and how near an approach they have made to brutal stupidity—as they are unconscious of the least impropriety, they feel no shame in this state of entire nudity—it also excites surprise that their naked surface should resist the remarkable damps, rapid changes, and burning sun of their climate.

But we should omit one of the most prominent traits in the portrait of Indian character were we not to notice their *love of war*. With many of the aboriginal nations of the new world *war* was the all-absorbing engagement.* Each Indian passed through the se-

* The nations composing the great empires of Mexico and Peru are not included with the fierce and bloody tribes of which we speak. Those nations, especially such as were embraced in the Peruvian empire, were of a docile, pacific character. Their character had been formed under the mild, paternal sway of incarial power.

verest discipline before he could be admitted to the rank of a warrior. The great aim was to raise their passive courage, by this previous discipline, to the utmost point of human endurance; so that the dread of falling into the hands of cold-blooded murderers might not intimidate them when on the grim edge of battle. Nor are we furnished by the history of any ancient nation with instances of more enduring firmness than those which have occurred among these natives under the most shocking tortures. Indeed, it would have been incredible that flesh and blood could suppress every fear and complaint under such protracted agony, had it not been made indubitable by the most authentic history of these tribes. In the event of their becoming prisoners of war they were fully aware that nothing but the most excruciating torments awaited them. That a groan, or a sigh, or even a distorted feature, would open new sources of pleasure to the malice of their tormentors, and consign their own memory to the traditional annals of infamy; and as savages have little reason to attach value to life, as the sensibilities of their nature have been previously made callous, and as they know not what death is, in its fearful and unending consequences, it was the acme of their ambition to meet their horrid doom with a sullen coolness.

Their rage for war was the ferocity of wild beasts, and not the valor of military heroes. They were roused to rush into the field of blood, not by a hope of booty, but by a thirst for revenge—not by a love of glory, but by a desire of extermination. They never entered a field of battle without a dreadful purpose to spill the blood of the last man in the ranks of the enemy; for those who were not slain in the field were to be butchered for the amusement, and often for the food of the conquerors. Thus, as devastation, and not conquest, was the fatal aim of all their warlike enterprises, every means of destruction within their power was eagerly employed. The most deadly poison furnished by the vegetable kingdom was used to tinge their arrows, so that the slightest wound should inflict the most insupportable agonies, and issue in certain death.

To give or receive quarters in the field of conflict was never thought of by these infuriated tigers; so entirely were they disrobed of humanity that nothing could quench their rage until their vengeance was glutted by their enemies' blood. Hence it was found when Europeans entered the new world that several tribes in South America had recently become extinct, and this work of utter extermination had doubtless been going on during many centuries. Indeed, the work of death was the only object within their mental range which could rouse their slumbering energies; and when the bloody strife was ended, they sunk back into their previous inertness, from which they were not awakened until the yell of war summoned them again to the field of mutual massacre.

But the nations which the discoverers of the new world found in a state of civilization possessed a pacific character, which formed a perfect contrast to those blood-thirsty and ferocious barbarians. This was the only portion of the aboriginal population which the conquerors of South America may be said to have subdued. All the more scattered tribes, like those in North America, were either exterminated by the conquerors, or made to retire into the more

inaccessible regions of their forests. But Peru and Mexico, and a great portion of the kingdom of the Zac, were not only taken by their European invaders, but their thickly settled inhabitants were subdued and mastered.

With a glance at the oppression which these suffering millions endured, we shall conclude the present number. But this must be preceded by a rapid outline of the *colonial* system by which Spain governed her South American possessions. These colonies did not belong to Spain, but to the king of Spain, having been granted to Ferdinand and Isabella by Pope Alexander VI. By this grant all the southern hemisphere of the new world, west of a given longitude, was made the property of the Spanish crown. Though his holiness had no more property in the American territory than the emperor of China, the superstition of the age gave validity to this ecclesiastical title. Hence all the authority of the discoverers, the conquerors, and the governors of South America, flowed entirely and directly from the Spanish crown.

All grants of lands were made by the king, and when the conditions failed on which they were to be possessed, they reverted to him. The highest officers felt themselves acting under no responsibility, but to him; all power, political and civil, centred in him. In every instance, the system required that in any of its parts it should be exercised, modified, or suspended, entirely at his pleasure, totally independent of his Spanish subjects at home, and of his transatlantic vassals in America. The utmost extent to which the civil privileges of the colonies reached was the power of creating the inferior city and village officers, and of regulating their internal commerce, under restrictions so severe as to leave them nothing but the empty name of privilege.

Indeed, the tyranny by which they were governed was scarcely inferior to that under which Russia or Turkey has groaned. Nor was it less desolating, as the agents of the despot acted thousands of miles from the source of the power which clothed them. Each deputy possessed within his viceroyalty all the prerogatives of his sovereign, and frequently exceeded the splendor of the Spanish court in the magnificence of his own. He generally appointed the chief officers in the military, executive, and judicial departments: he consequently could render them all subservient to his own purposes.

As it was the policy of the crown to make the American colonies in every possible way tributary to the parent state, it encouraged the working of mines to an extent extremely prejudicial to the permanent interest of the colonies. By this arrangement the king aimed at two objects—the increase of his revenue, and the diversion of public attention from agricultural and manufacturing pursuits. The tribute claimed by the crown was one-fifth of all the precious metals extracted from the mines. As these amounted to millions annually, they produced a larger tribute than could have otherwise been derived from the new world; and by depending on the gold and silver of their mountains for a supply of their wants, they would remit a large proportion of the remaining four-fifths to the mother country for the commodities for which they were left entirely dependent on her. The second and paramount object was

to *continue* the colonies entirely dependent for all their merchandise on the parent state, by preventing them from providing for themselves. By this narrow and selfish policy the wants of the colonies were multiplied, and by a kindred arrangement these wants could be supplied by Spain alone.

Not a vessel belonging to the colonies could enter any foreign port on the globe; the Spanish ports themselves were not open to colonial vessels. Indeed, they were prohibited from going to neighboring provinces only under the most intolerable restrictions. Confiscation and death were the dreadful penalty inflicted for trading with any other nation. Nor was this exclusiveness confined to mercantile transactions, it reached to the privilege of social intercourse. No foreigner could even enter the colonies without special permission from the highest authorities. Thus were they cut off from all intercourse with the human race, little less than if located on another planet; and to secure the perpetuity of this state of insulation and vassalage, almost every important office in South America was filled by natives of Spain, or such as had been sent there to be educated under the shade of the throne.

In examining the records of official appointments in Spanish America, which extend through three hundred years, we find, of the one hundred and sixty viceroys, and of the five hundred and eighty captain-generals, governors, and presidents of the royal audiences, only eighteen which were not born in Spain; and this small minority had passed several years in the parent state, and become deeply imbued with its spirit of oppression. Thus, from the period of the conquest up to that of the revolution, these provinces were under the sway of foreign officers, who had no interest to consult but that of their family, and no favor to court but that of their transatlantic sovereign. And here, where no officer felt himself amenable to the people, where the only being on earth to whom he was responsible was located in the old world, what could be expected but the deepest corruption and the most high-handed oppression! Such, in fact, was the result.

Perhaps modern times furnish not a single instance of an administration so thoroughly corrupt in all its branches, and in all its operations, as was that in South America prior to the revolution. Under such a system, tyrannical in its nature, and pressed into purposes of self-aggrandizement by all its functionaries, what but the utmost cruelty could fall to the lot of the enslaved Indians! Their very groans were stifled before they could reach the ear of the distant monarch. At the commencement of the Spanish settlement in South America a certain number of Indians was assigned to each landholder, somewhat after the manner in which the Russians are disposed of at the sale of the estate on which they may live. This gave the proprietor power over the persons of the natives, which soon matured into a system of the most oppressive tyranny. In the master avarice extinguished humanity, and his slaves were used rather like brutes than like men. Under this iron-hearted cruelty these unprotected sufferers wasted away with so frightful a rapidity that, after millions of them had sunk into a premature grave, and fears were entertained that the entire race would become extinct, they were raised in some of the colonies to the rank

of *citizens*. This, however, instead of raising them to a state of liberty, only changed the *circumstances* of their bondage; they passed from under the hand of private to that of public oppression.

In this new relation to the state there was demanded of them an amount of tribute which was often entirely beyond their ability, which involved them in more fearful calamities than any with which their former state had threatened them. Of their sufferings, the history of Peru furnishes a most affecting picture. This viceroyalty was divided into fifty-eight provinces. Over each of these was placed a pretor, who was invested with the power of judging and punishing civil and criminal offences, in the name of the king. He, being authorized to impose a heavy tax on each Indian, not younger than eighteen or older than fifty-five, did not scruple to demand it of such as were both much below and far above these ages. The law also exempted all caciques with their families, and such Indians as were corporeally infirm and mentally deficient. But these enjoyed no exemption from the exorbitant claims of the pretor. On the old and the young, the healthy and the invalid, he imposed alike the enormous tax; and in every case where his receipt was lost, the Indian was imperatively required to meet the same claim the second time. To prevent the aged and infirm from being cruelly scourged by these merciless collectors for unavoidable delinquency, brothers and friends tasked themselves doubly, and often sunk under this insupportable burden.

In the event the Indian could not advance the required sum, whatever could be found in his hut was sacrificed to raise it; and when there was too little for the purpose, he was compelled to labor at so reduced a price that he could scarcely cancel the claims of one year before those of another became due; and not unfrequently did his miseries end his days before the iron grasp of his oppressor had been unloosed.

Another source of Indian sufferings originated in the liberty which the pretors obtained to distribute goods among the natives, under the pretence of promoting habits of diligence. History never recorded a more horrible system of oppression and tyranny than that into which this was matured by these official merchants. The legal right which they had to dispense such goods as they pleased—to fix upon them their own price—to sell them without the consent of the receiver—and to obtain payment by coercion—opened a door for boundless extortion and the most insupportable tyranny. When these men entered on their office they purchased, at a reduced price, a large amount of unsaleable goods, which they disposed of to the Indians—against their loudest remonstrances—at six or eight times the primary price! In vain did these miserable beings urge, with tears, that they could not pay for such articles—that they did not need them—that they knew not even the use of them. All their most humble and earnest beseechings to be released from this necessity were unheeded; the goods they *must* take, though many of them were not less unsuitable to their state than the finest Turkey carpets would have been to their floorless hovels.

One part of this system of insult and robbery consisted in the distribution of *mules* among the natives. Of these each pretor procured five or six hundred, and sold them to the Indians for four or

five times their value, under circumstances in which they could neither be hired without his consent, or withheld when he called for them. Hence when a merchant needed mules to transport his goods his application was not to the proprietor, but to the pretor, who always commanded such Indians to perform the journey as were most deeply in his debt. After the pretor had received the transportation money, he refunded one-fourth of it to the merchant, to be applied in feeding the mules; one half of it was allowed toward the debt originating in the purchase of the animals; one-eighth was to answer on the unavoidable debt for the goods forced on them; and the remaining one-eighth went to the owners of the mules to defray their expenses during the tour. But as this was scarcely sufficient for the unavoidable demands of the journey, whenever an accident occurred it fell in its whole weight on the Indians. When a few mules failed or died—which was generally the case, on these long and rugged journeys—their owners were ruined; but the ruthless pretor relaxed none of his claims.

These are but a small part of the practical bearing of that barbarous system by which the pretors wasted and crushed this unhappy race. Nor was the lot of the other class of Indians, who were hired to landholders, less wretched. These received from \$14 to \$18 per annum, and the use of a garden thirty or forty yards in extent. The tribute demanded of each was \$8, which left not more than \$10 for the support of his family; \$7 of this small pittance was expended for corn, and the balance was indispensable for the coarse covering which clothed him. Then the claims of the curate remained to be met, so that the laborer unavoidably involved himself in debt to his employer; and while this was the case, the creditor had control over his person. As years rolled on the debt accumulated, which made his life and slavery commensurate; and often after his demise his children were compelled, by the greatest drudgery, to cancel the inevitable debt of their father.

If a member of his family died, the father was overwhelmed with the utmost consternation. Believing, as he did, that the agonizing soul of the deceased could enjoy no repose until the ecclesiastical services were paid for, no personal sacrifice was deemed too painful to procure the requisite sum. Thus superstition conspired with avarice to consummate the wretchedness of their victims.

Such as failed to meet the claims of the pretor were doomed to a fate still more severe. After being dragged to the manufactories, they were compelled to labor for one real per day; one half of which went to liquidate that officer's claim, and the other half to procure food for the laborer. As this was furnished by the employer, it often consisted of damaged grain and diseased animals; and the quantity even of this wretched fare was far below a competency. When any by flight sought release from this living death, they were soon overtaken by the pursuer, and dragged back, with their hair tied to his horse's tail. The punishments inflicted on them in the event of any delinquency was of the severest character. Every species of torments which the wanton cruelty of an easily enraged overseer could invent was endured by these patient sufferers. When other means failed to satisfy his ire, two burning sticks were so rubbed together as to emit showers of sparks on the

naked back of the delinquent, who was firmly bound with his face to the earth.

But, of all the means by which havoc was made of this trampled race, none have been so fearfully successful as their *servitude in the mines*. A legal regulation existed, called the mita, by which every proprietor of lands and mines claimed the personal services of a certain number of Indians for the space of a year. This fund of human labor was so regulated as to procure annually, by ballot, a sufficient number of Indians for the various work assigned them. So dreaded were the services of the mines, that those on whom the lot fell considered their summons to the work equivalent to the sentence of death. Before they went to that sepulchre of their nation every preparation was made as though they were never again to return. The weeping farewells which rung through their cottages at their separation from their friends and homes resembled the doleful scenes of a dying hour.

When the labors of the year were finished, they found themselves in debt to their employer; as he was responsible for \$8 tribute imposed on each Indian, and furnished his laborers with their miserable food and lodging, their wages were absorbed, and future services still due. While they remained in arrears to their employer, they could not leave his service. Thus each succeeding year accumulated their unavoidable debt till all hope of release fled for ever; but more frequently death freed the sufferer before the first year revolved. Exchanging the delightful air and health-preserving exercise of his own native mountains, for the noxious vapors and exhausting labors of the mines, the Indian soon began to pine under disease; and, after a few months, frequently sunk spirit-broken into an untimely grave. Then the desolate widow, with her bereaved children, were thrown back to their empty hut, to bleed over remembered wrongs which had murdered a father and a husband!

Nor were these instances of oppressed humanity few or unfrequent; more than twelve thousand of this enslaved race were annually subject to this mita-conscription in Potosi alone. In this single mountain, where nearly five thousand mines have been opened, not less than one million three hundred thousand Indians have sunk into the grave under this iron rod of tyranny! Who then shall draw the terrific picture of Indian suffering endured in all the mines in the new world. The stream of gold and silver which was poured for three centuries from South America into the parent state was chiefly extracted from the mountains by this suffering race, and has gone to Spain stained with their blood, which cries to Heaven for retributive justice.

But this bloody work of extermination was urged forward by other means than the pestiferous vapors of the mines. Marauding parties from Brazil depopulated thousands of miles in search of natives, for the purpose of supplying that empire with slaves. These merciless man-hunters, more savage than the tribes they wasted in every expedition, added murder to the crime of man-stealing. Their captives were bound together, and driven, like herds of cattle, through storms and streams, often fainting with hunger, and famishing with thirst. Those that became too much exhausted to advance with the company were shot to the ground, or cut down

with the sword. If infants obstructed the march, they were torn from their mothers' breasts, and dashed before their eyes! In this ferocious manner three hundred thousand were hunted down within the brief period of five years; and in the short space between 1628 and 1630 six hundred thousand were dragged from their homes, and sold in Rio for slaves.

In examining the various records of inhumanity and blood, which extend through one hundred and thirty years, not less than two millions are found to have been sold for slaves, or cruelly murdered, by these kidnappers. Thus four hundred Indian towns were left one vast solitude, covered only with the ruins of deserted dwellings, and stained with the blood of their former inhabitants.

But our limits preclude the detail of that almost endless variety of miseries which were inflicted on this unfortunate people. These would form a volume of history, and awaken the deepest sympathy. Were we to pass in silence the facts, that the means of subsistence enjoyed by Europeans in South America were procured by the personal labor of the Indians; that the treasures of immense wealth, possessed by thousands prior to the revolution, were opened by them; that the numberless flocks and herds which filled the valleys and whitened the hills of their oppressors were raised and guarded by them; and that scarcely a vestige of this vast amount remains with this beggared race; still would their history form an agitating record at which humanity would shudder.

It has been alleged in behalf of the inflictors of all these various sufferings on the Indians, that they brought to them the *knowledge of Christianity*. Had they indeed done this in the high and significant import of these terms, it would have arrayed them before coming generations in the glory of the most benignant benefactors. But did they do this? The instruments of divine mercy could not have come to these pagan nations, bearing the torch of a Saviour's dying love in one hand, and fetters by which to load them for ever, in the other. If the most faithful historical records deserve our confidence, we are compelled to believe that the conquerors of South America brought no religion to its ancient inhabitants, but such as would best subserve the purposes of their ambition, and most effectually enslave the millions they had conquered. The ecclesiastical establishment was evidently instituted in these colonies as an auxiliary to the civil government. It was employed not to diffuse intelligence among these children of nature—not to elevate from its deep degradation this rude mass of pagan mind; but as a mighty engine of power, by which tyranny could sway a more absolute control. The priest was so necessary to the magistrate that civil power was never wanting to effectuate the selfish plans which the hierarchy might originate. Hence many of the clergy in Mexico and Peru became masters of the most princely fortunes. They did not feed the flock, but they fleeced it.

As a specimen of their rapacity, one or two well-authenticated instances may be here adduced:—A curate in Quito exacted for each year, exclusive of his dues and fees, two hundred sheep, six thousand head of poultry, four thousand pigs, and fifty thousand eggs. To insure the payment of this enormous claim, he refused the masses on the respective festivals until a due proportion of it

had been met; and as the deluded multitude believed that to be without these was to be exposed to every curse which could threaten the enemies of Heaven, no exertions were too great to prevent this overwhelming calamity. Indeed, those men, who possessed power to inflict the most fearful judgments during this life, and to leave the soul in unreprieved agonies through all the fiery ages of the next, could not fail to have their kind interposition secured at any expense.

Among their artifices to make their agency in changing the allotment of the dead a source of revenue, the following, transmitted by a traveler of unquestionable veracity, may be noticed:—A priest in 1817, having left a young man of his profession in his place during his absence on a journey, inquired immediately on his return who had died during his absence? Such a rich cacique, replied the young substitute. What did you receive for the funeral services, rejoined the priest? So much was the answer. The amount being but a moderate sum, the priest was exceedingly exasperated; and after administering a severe reprimand to the newly initiated, he sent in great haste for the sons of the deceased. "You," said he to the young men, "have acted unworthy of your noble family. By withholding the requisite price, you compel the soul of your pious father to agonize longer in purgatorial torments. Why did you not generously accelerate his passage to paradise?" Stung by these cutting rebukes, the sons expressed the deepest regret for their delinquency; but added, "Now there is no remedy." "Yes, there is," says the priest, "I will compromise the matter. I will have the statue of your excellent and pious father formed of wax; and funeral services shall be performed over his effigy, and masses shall be said for the repose of his soul." The sons affected an agreeable surprise at this newly-invented remedy, and were glad to pay five or six hundred dollars for this mock funeral, as it was the only means by which they could escape the terrible censure of this angry ecclesiastic. Thus these men, by chicanery, made a living worth six or eight hundred dollars, bring them as many thousands. The contributions they arbitrarily imposed on the Indians, and the enormous sums they charged for their agency in procuring the repose of departed friends, in some instances swelled their revenue to that of a princely fortune.

That they succeeded in making vast numbers of the natives Catholics, is a fact which involved as little difficulty as it does doubt. With regard to the millions which embraced the Catholic system in the densely populated empires of Peru and Mexico, little reason needs to be assigned for their doing so, excepting that which is found in the Spanish conquest. To induce an ignorant nation, reduced to abject slavery, to exchange its superstition for the religion of its conquerors, requires less evidence than that which convinces the understanding and sways the heart; especially when the new system, as in the case in question, allows the converts to incorporate many of their former ceremonies into that religion for which they exchange a portion of their own. None who are acquainted with the history of Catholic missions among other rude nations can remain at a loss to account for the sudden conversion of these conquered empires.

The ready manner in which the more barbarous nations of the new world received Catholicism is referable, in part, to the same principles. The missionaries pretended that many of the doctrines and mysteries of Christianity resembled the crude and barbarous superstitions which had been originated in the depths of paganism. Others, guided by the influence and example of their chiefs, exchanged their religion for one of whose distinctive principles they were totally ignorant; and a still greater number, overawed by that power, at whose touch the glories of their ancestors had fled, embraced, as a matter of *policy*, the religion of their conquerors. Indeed, it is impossible to take an enlightened survey of this apparent change, which occurred among these pagan tribes, without attributing it chiefly to the combined influence of force and fraud.

These spurious conversions left their subjects in nearly the same state of mental and moral degradation as that in which their ancestors had groped in the starless night of their paganism. If we allow that their new religion taught them to abandon some of their most brutal and bloody rites—to cover themselves with garments instead of paints—to quit the practice of cutting their chins, noses, and cheeks—to abstain from the worship of birds, reptiles, and quadrupeds—and to refrain from exposing their infirm offspring to that inevitable death to which they had long been in the habit of consigning them; if we grant that these changes are the fruit of its agency, we ascribe to it the full amount of its effects. Close attention to these Indians, who are said to be Christianized, will leave no doubt that their conversion consists in *dispossessing* their minds of *old ideas*, without supplying them with new ones; and in transferring their devotions from toads and reptiles to the Virgin Mary and the images of the saints. This change in the created objects of their worship was entirely consistent with the same moral state of the worshipper. Hence, while they renounced the most grossly superstitious parts of their paganism, they retained the highest veneration for its more refined usages. Had the missionaries dissipated mental darkness by communicating to them the knowledge of letters, and moral darkness by pouring around them the light of revealed truth; had they thus elicited the mental and moral powers, and waked the soul from its profound and protracted slumbers, the Indians would have abandoned, and not exchanged, the objects of their idolatrous worship.* But that the Indians were subjects of no such elevating process was deplorably evident, by that deep degradation in which the new religion allowed them to continue. In a state of so great imbecility were these native disciples long after their boasted conversion had been effected, that an ecclesiastical decree pronounced them incompetent to receive the eucharist; and their incapacity was the only reason why they were exonerated from the terrible jurisdiction of the inquisition—which, in 1570, by the pious zeal of Philip II., was established in South America.

* It would be doing the greatest injustice to many individuals among the Catholic missionaries to involve them all in this censure. There are some bright instances of sacrifice, personal hazard, and even martyrdom, suffered by these men, in their noble attempts to convert the American Indians. Had this been the character of them in general, some of the blackest pages in the history of human depravity had been wanting.

It was not till Paul III. issued a counter decree—which raised the Indians to the rank of rational beings—that they were admitted to the Lord's supper. Indeed, had the missionaries enlightened them, they would have defeated the very object for which their missions were established. It would have unfitted them to subserve the purposes of political tyranny and hierarchical ambition. Several of the tribes, with no more light than that which nature shed upon them, perceiving the boundless ambition of these men, burst away from their restraints, and resumed the native liberty of their savage state.

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GOD'S METHOD OF WEIGHING THE ACTIONS OF MEN.

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1 Sam. ii, 3: "*The Lord is a God of knowledge, and by him are actions weighed.*"

To trace the relation of these words to the context, and to explain the history in which we find them, would require a course of reflections not precisely suited to the pulpit, and would perhaps be a misappropriation of our time. To develop the strong moral principles they embrace, and to bring them home to our hearts and consciences, may be equally as interesting, and a decidedly more profitable employment.

The character of Almighty God, as intimated in the text, is in perfect contrast with what we know of human nature from every day's observation. "The Lord is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed;" but man is an imperfect and a short-sighted creature, whose recollections of the past are defective and confused—whose knowledge of the future is mere matter of conjecture, or favor from God; and whose understanding of the numerous subjects around him is limited to their names, and some few of the purposes to which they may be applied.

On almost every topic that enlivens the conversation of the fire-side—that occupies the attention of the public through the medium of the press—or that calls forth the energies and resources of the pulpit—it is a conceded point, that we know but in part. True as this is of every other question, it is still more strikingly true of many of the more interesting and important events in the moral history of each individual man; and yet, notwithstanding, it is deserving of remark, that on these very subjects our precipitancy in judgment is so perfectly conformed to the limited nature of our information, that the one might, in most instances, be regarded as the rule of the other—or these two might be supposed to sustain the relation of cause and effect.

Behold, then, in the character of Jehovah, a standing reproof of the arrogance and the ignorant presumption of man! for, although a God of knowledge, he weighs the actions of men. From him let us learn to judge, not from appearances, but to judge righteous judgment.

Instead of pursuing these reflections further, we shall,

I. *Make some remarks on the knowledge of God.*

II. *Show that, in the light of this knowledge, he will weigh the actions of men.*

I. *Make some remarks on the knowledge of God.*

When we speak of knowledge, as an attribute of *human* character, we refer to that state of mental enlargement and improvement of which the human mind is capable, or to which it has been elevated, through the power of education. But knowledge in man is always of necessity comparatively limited; the weakness of his faculties, the brevity of his life, and the numerous cares and afflictions attendant on his present state of being, all present barriers of fearful magnitude to the enlargement of his intellectual research, and to the accumulation of those facts and deductions, the possession of which constitute a man of knowledge.

But when we raise our minds to the great Father of spirits, the Lord of life and glory, we have attained an elevation where none of these difficulties attend the operation of nature, and where they cannot in any way impair the conception, or mislead the judgment of the understanding, for the simple reason that he is a God of knowledge.

The knowledge of God is that distinct and complete perception which he has of all beings and things that do or that can exist. It comprehends their essence, attributes, relations, and tendencies, and all that is mysterious in their origin, wonderful in the progressive development of their nature, or eventful in its consummation or overthrow. It marks the rise and influence of every cause and agency in the material, intellectual, and moral departments of his works, and traces the nature, number, and magnitude of their effects; in a word, the universal range of matter and mind, whatever may be the mode of its existence, or the place of its location.

This knowledge belongs essentially to God. He is a God of knowledge, as he is a God of truth, of holiness, and of power; it is not more essential to him to be uncaused in his being, than it is that he be independent in his knowledge. All other knowledge is derived, whether it be that of angels or of men. If not received by direct revelation from God, it is obtained by the careful exercise and cultivation of their intellectual powers. It is, therefore, progressive in its nature, and is gradually rising into clearer views of the various topics on which it is exercised.

But the knowledge of God is underived. It is independent; as there was none before him, so there is none equal to him. Of all created beings, it may be said that there was a time when they had but one idea, then two, &c. But the Lord is a God of knowledge; what he now understands he always understood. Nothing is new to him, nor can any thing be old as the subject of his knowledge. The ideas he now has he always had, and will have for ever. He is the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose understanding is infinite, whose knowledge is unsearchable, and whose judgments are past finding out. Hence saith the prophet, "Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord? or, being his counsellor, hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and

taught him knowledge, and showed to him the way of understanding?"

But the knowledge of God is absolute. It not only extends to all things that can be known, but it fully comprehends all to which it extends. The past, the present, and the future are all equally present with him. There is no height, nor depth; no oblivious shades of the past, nor unexplored regions in the immensity of the future, on which his omniscient eye does not rest with fixed and searching gaze. As he fills all space with his presence, so he comprehends all duration by his knowledge. As he is everywhere to uphold all things by the word of his power, so does he pervade all duration, inhabiting eternity, to know the end from the beginning:—

“O wondrous knowledge, deep and high!
Where can a creature hide?”

To us some things are secret, but to God there are no secrets. That which is done in the dark is as if it had transpired in the light; and that which was spoken in the ear in the closet, as if it had been proclaimed upon the house-top. To us some things are imperfectly known, because they are remote in their location, but God is everywhere; and the adoring seraph that burns at the foot of the throne is not more perfectly understood, in all the elements of his intellectual and moral worth, than those kindred spirits who explore the remotest regions in the immensity of space. To us some things are mysterious, but to God there are no mysteries—none in nature; none in providence; none in grace.

To him the whole economy of nature is perfectly simple in its construction, and regular and harmonious in its operations. To him there are no intricacies or perplexities in providence. He brings light out of darkness, order out of confusion, and even causes the wrath of man to praise him. So also in redemption, which stretches out before us as an illimitable and fathomless ocean of light, of truth, and of loveliness. To us it is illimitable, but God “meteth it out with a span:” to us it is unfathomable, but God “holdeth these waters of life in the hollow of his hand.” Its profoundest depths, its comprehensive range, its mysterious and hallowing power on the human mind; every thing, from the immaculate conception of the Lord Jesus to the regeneration of the human soul, is perfectly understood by him, for he is a God of knowledge.

When we contemplate this truth, either abstractly or as it is exemplified in the works of creation and providence, it is one of great and overwhelming power and sublimity. But, viewed in its obvious relation to the moral principles and habits of men, as the light in which they appear to the Almighty, and as the rule according to which he will try our actions, it is one of fearful and startling import. But this is the view given of the subject in the text; and to this aspect of the question we turn, in order,

II. To show that, in the light of this knowledge, he will weigh the actions of men.

The text manifestly intimates that the knowledge of God is the light in which things appear to him, and according to which he approves or disapproves of them. As this knowledge is infinite, he

can have no false perception of any thing, nor can he place an improper estimate on any of the actions of men. With men frequently that which is of little worth is highly esteemed, while things of infinite importance are set at naught; but with God actions are weighed.

Weighing is a process by which the intrinsic or relative value of articles is ascertained or determined, and always supposes a standard of value; a conformity or non-conformity to which determines the value of the article weighed. Hence the term is figuratively introduced in the text, as intimating the exact manner in which God will examine and judge of the actions of men. Every thing has its appropriate measure or law. The proper measure of the actions of intelligent beings is law; and of moral actions is moral law. And by this standard the God of knowledge will weigh the actions of men; not, however, abstractly, but in connection with their motives, their circumstances, the intention of the agent, and their results.

First. Actions will be weighed in connection with their motives. The motive is that particular consideration which, being presented to the mind, determines it to act. It is, therefore, a circumstance which gives primary character to action, and fixes its reputation with God, before it is matter of cognizance with man. An act may be good in itself, when viewed apart from its motives; whereas, if properly considered, it has all the elements of a heinous wickedness, and is justly deserving of the deepest hell.

It is good to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to perform the various duties of religion; but if the motive from which these actions flow be unsound, it changes their entire character as matter of acceptable service to God. The impurity of the fountain poisons the stream, and that which it was hoped would be ground of commendation and reward becomes the cause of a harsher censure and a deeper condemnation.

As this is an age of much apparent liberality of feeling and action—an age in which all the passions and predilections of the human mind are marshalled and brought into the field for the accomplishment of great and benevolent objects—it may not be amiss, in order to avoid a future disappointment in our reward, to bear in mind that actions are weighed in connection with their motives.

The motive determines both the nature and time of the reward. Men who perform their works for God, who have a regard to the recompense of well-doing, will receive that recompense hereafter. But they who do their works to be seen of men, to please themselves, to gratify their pride, their prejudice, or their party, “verily, I say unto you, that they have their reward,” so far as it may be regarded as matter of benevolence or public good. But, so far as it was an act of hypocrisy and self-seeking, their retribution is yet with the Almighty.

There is a class of men whose liberality is only the dictate of sheer good nature. What they do is done under the power of constitutional impulse, without any special regard to moral principle or obligation to God. They give as readily to build a synagogue for Satan as a temple for Jehovah, and are as ready to hold stock in the theatre as a seat in the church of Christ.

Another class there is who mostly give, but always do it grudgingly. They desire the reputation, but they abhor the expense of being liberal; and always, when called upon to aid in any benevolent enterprise, experience a most painful struggle between inclination and character. They desire to be reputed generous and liberal; but the cost is a burden too intolerable to be borne—and is not borne, if they can manage to save their reputation and escape.

We see another class, whose contributions are always regulated by a steady regard to *praise*. They never give, unless it be under such circumstances as will exhibit them to advantage before the world! A poor man who needs a morsel of bread, or a garment to protect him against the piercing cold, is hastily shaken off, as a rude and insolent leech, from their benevolence; while the agent of some public institution, whose reports will be duly made known to the world, receives, perhaps, in the same day or hour, a thousand-fold more than would have made the poor man's heart sing for joy, and filled his lean and gloomy home, at least, with transient comfort.

There is yet another class of character who always give, both with promptitude and cheerfulness, not because they are interested in the object, or pleased with the applicant, but because they regard it as matter of duty to God; believing it better to give, even to a hundred unworthy applicants, than to withhold from one truly deserving. They always give according to the ability with which God has blessed them. Here it certainly is by no means difficult to conjecture whose actions, when weighed in the balance of the sanctuary, will answer the demands of the law, and who will then be seen to have spent their strength for naught, and their labor in vain.

Secondly. Actions will be weighed in connection with their circumstances. These are

Circumstances of time and place.—The time and place of an act is always a consideration of moment. The sons of Eli rendered themselves specially offensive in the sight of God, by the perpetration of their wickedness at the door of the tabernacle, and in the time of the sacrifices. It evinced a state of the greatest abandonment to vice and recklessness thus to rush into the presence of the Most High, and to change the temple of his holiness into a theatre of folly and crime.

If we may readily conceive it possible, on the one hand, for a person to be placed in circumstances in which it would be almost impossible to avoid sin, of which the history of Joseph furnishes an instance; so, on the other, we can specify situations in life in which it would require a very great want of correct principle to run into wickedness. The sons of Eli, above alluded to, are a case in point.

Now, if it be an aggravation of treason and rebellion to attempt the life of a monarch on his throne, and in the midst of his ministers, surely it is a circumstance highly aggravating to sin against God in his holy temple, and in the time of his worship; to blaspheme his fearful name at the foot of his altar; and venture thus into the very light of heaven with the dispositions and the intentions of fiends.

There are also circumstances of *grace and mercy*. That it does please Almighty God frequently to pour out of his Holy Spirit, in an unusual manner, on the church and on the world, is certain; and it is not less certain that these seasons afford special advantages to men for moral and spiritual improvement, and, of course, impose corresponding obligations.

Again: there are circumstances of wrath and judgment. When the Almighty rises up out of his holy place, and shakes terribly the earth, and the sinners in Zion are afraid, and fearfulness surpriseth the hypocrite, then, saith the prophet, "when thy judgments are abroad in the earth, the inhabitants will learn righteousness."

Now "the Lord is a God of knowledge," his understanding is infinite, "and by him actions are weighed;" weighed in connection with their circumstances. There is the worldling who interrupts a serious discourse of our Lord Jesus with this request, "Lord, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me." He ought to have said, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" "How shall I escape the wrath to come?" But, with the Son of God before him for his instructor, his mind was engrossed with the things of this life: he was willing that Christ should adjust his temporal difficulties, but cared not that he should enlighten his soul—as many now value their ministers the more as they are clever, jovial, business men, than as they are men of piety and fidelity in their office.

Behold Judas, who, while his Lord was discoursing on the subject of his approaching passion, praying with and for his disciples, with holiest fervor and sympathy—there he sat, settling in his mind the price of his Master, and resolving to sell him for thirty pieces of silver!—like some in our own times, who, while they sit under the word of life, meditate the ruin of those that preach it to them. Reader, art thou the man?

There was Ananias, who, in a time of great religious excitement in the church, resolved to be liberal, but afterward, yielding to his natural love of the world, he refused to redeem his promise, lied to conceal his dishonesty, was smitten of God, and died.

In all these cases, it will be seen that the circumstances give character to the action; and in judging of the one, the other must be taken into the account.

Thirdly. Actions will be weighed in connection with their design, or the intention of the agent.

Men not unfrequently intend more evil than they are actually able to accomplish; they also fall short of the good they previously designed. In both instances they are judged of according to the actual results; but God fixes the reputation of the deed by reference to the intention; and therefore the widow's mite was more acceptable to him than the abundance of the more ostentatious contributors; for if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that which a man hath.

The Lord said to David, "Thou didst well, that it was in thy heart to build me a house," although the work was reserved for another person. Thus it was well for Whitefield to intend, or project the building of an orphan house in Georgia. It was well for Dr. Coke to intend his East India missions; for although these holy men were not permitted to realize all their fond expectations, their

views were obviously in accordance with the counsels of the Most High; and, in the providence of God, they pointed to fields of labor that others were to occupy; and certainly in that day when actions are weighed, the benevolence of the intention will add mightily to the reputation of their deeds.

And then the unlawful cravings of avarice will also be scrutinized as theft and robbery—the dark, cruel musings of malice will be punished as murder—and the evil glances of licentious love will be turned into hell as adultery! For he that said, “Thou shalt not steal,” also said, “Thou shalt not covet;” and the authority that said, “Thou shalt not kill,” has also declared, that “he that hateth his brother is a murderer.” See Matt. v, 26, 27. But once more,

Fourthly. Actions are to be weighed in connection with their results.

Men most generally, when they perform an act, especially if it be of doubtful tendency, fix to themselves certain limits within which its consequences are to be confined. But all such restrictive regulations, imposed on our own deeds, are perfectly the work of the imagination. While the thought is yet in the heart, and the word remains on the tongue, they may be easily suppressed; and, although in themselves displeasing to God, they exert no deleterious influence over the affairs of others. But when that thought becomes imbodied in words, or that desire of the heart starts into the existence of a palpable deed, it is then immortal; it becomes an active principle in society—a circulating medium of good or evil—and aids or injures multitudes of whom its author will never hear, until actions are weighed in connection with their results. To place this in a clearer light, accompany me in the following remarks:—

That miserable child of avarice and perdition, the devotee of cards and dice, whose only prayer and purpose under heaven is to dupe and defraud his fellow men, does not, perhaps, design all the withering consequences that attend his heartless trade. He did not design to drive a father to distraction, to break the heart of a tender female, a wife, a mother—to reduce a family of innocent and helpless children to beggary and ruin. No; he did not intend, nor did he care to prevent it. Urged on by the cruel lust of gain, he resolved to make every thing bend to his own purposes; he closed his own eyes upon consequences, and left others to grapple with them as they might be able. But is he therefore excusable, either before the world, or the Judge of all the earth? Certainly not. The incendiary who casts a fire-brand, not caring where it falls, to the destruction of your property, and asks, Am I not in sport? Or the assassin, who discharges his fire-arms into the busy throng of industrious men, to the loss of limb or life, is not more truly guilty than he.

The *libertine* who, by many a base and unmanly art, by per-juring his conscience and selling his soul, at last succeeded in destroying the object of his criminal affection, did not intend all the gloomy results that ensued;—the ruined mother—the murdered child—the deathless infamy on earth—the ceaseless torture in hell. No; he did not intend them, nor did he care to prevent them. He would not, and therefore perhaps he did not see, all the consequences. But is his perverseness to be his apology; and because

he ruined your child with his eyes shut, closed for the purpose, is he therefore not a murderer?

The *slanderer*, who secretly set an evil suspicion in motion, smiled as it formed into rumor, and exulted as it gained credence in the neighborhood or the church, fancied to himself at first certain limits within which its effects would be confined. But an ordinary degree of attention would have seen these limits yielding as the air, and boundless as the horizon of human existence. And was he not capable of that reflection; and was he not under obligation to exercise it, in all cases, and more especially in those which concern the welfare and happiness of others? Most unquestionably he was; and he is therefore justly chargeable with the first, and also with the final result—the consequences which he might so easily have foreseen and prevented, and which, in refusing to prevent, he has constituted his own.

The unfeeling child of plenty, who turned from his door the hand of supplicating indigence, to shiver and perish in the winter cold, did not intend to be guilty of a brother's blood; but such was the effect—the natural, legitimate, and speedy effect. And who will answer for it at the bar of God when actions are weighed? Not merely the morsel of bread refused, but also the consequences of the refusal, will be weighed by Him who even now asks, "Cain, where is thy brother?" In vain you reply, "Am I my brother's keeper?" The voice of his blood crieth unto God from the ground.

The minister of the sanctuary, who, to serve himself, his friend, or his party, suppressed truth, or made the pulpit the instrument of his prejudice, his passions, or his pride, may read his doom in Ezek. xxxiii. Miserable man, who, occupying a position sufficiently elevated to see and show the way to life eternal, becomes a stumbling-block to deathless souls, who, either through his levity or his pride, his time-serving, carelessness, or crimes, are involved in shame and everlasting contempt.

But time would fail to follow out this branch of our subject into all its natural and important bearings. Our actions will be weighed in connection with their results—immediate, more remote, and final results. Nor is this unreasonable. The individual who fires a city may be regarded as continuing his agency while the devastating flame is unsubdued; and he who poisons a fountain is guilty of destroying the thirsty pilgrim who drinks of its stream. And so he who exhibits impure prints or books in his windows or elsewhere, or vends them from his counter, or issues them from his press, or creates them with his pen, or in any way brings them before the world, is, and ought to be, held accountable for their effects. Not unfrequently he sets a wave of thought and feeling in motion, which rolls on, swelling and spreading in its course, through a long succession of ages, casting up mire and dirt, the elements of moral contamination, disease, and death, to countless millions! Here are effects wider than the population of any one country or generation, and deathless as the mind. And is it not true, awfully true, of the prime mover of these effects, even while in his grave, that "he, being dead, yet speaketh."

Thus we see in what sense God will weigh the actions of men, in an even balance, held by an impartial hand, and seen in the light of

an infinite understanding. The simple deed, its circumstances, the intention of the agent, and its consequences—all these shall come into notice as matter of pleasing review, or of painful and tremendous condemnation. We shall,

III. Make some improvement.

First, let us learn to cultivate our rational powers. "The Lord is a God of knowledge;" heaven is a place of superior knowledge, where we shall see as we are seen, and know as we are known. The angels of light, those living creatures around about the throne, are pre-eminent in knowledge. And are we then to worship in that temple of light? Are we to be the companions of those celestial spirits, and to participate in the nature and felicity of Jehovah, the God of knowledge? Then let us cultivate our rational powers; let us endeavor to increase our stock of knowledge, by reading, observation, reflection, and prayer.

There are many topics within the range of human inquiry calculated to afford matter of pleasing contemplation to the mind of man, and to assist in weaning him from the low pursuits of this world, and in fitting him for a more elevated and felicitous state of being; but which, not being essential either to his present safety or future well-being, are not placed fully within the reach of the great mass of mind. Thus the splendor of the heavenly orbs, and the still more magnificent heavens, in which they proclaim the glory of God, and show forth his handiwork, are spread out before the universe of intelligent beings, a wonderful exhibition of the wisdom and power of the Almighty, which all may see and admire, but few can understand. It requires time, learning, and labor, and a superior reach of thought, to enter that vast theatre of action, and survey the order and majesty of the arrangement, the harmony and sublimity of the operation. But, if this is a pleasure reserved for the few, it is one the loss of which is not felt by the many; and the less so because the Spirit of God has dictated a book infinitely more sublime in its revelations, and important in its bearings, than the volume of nature. It is a farther revelation of his will, enlarged and improved, in which life and immortality are brought to light. Here we may learn the nature and will of God, the character and employments of celestial spirits, the destiny of the just made perfect, the rewards of virtue, and the inevitable doom of wicked men. Here we may learn the principles of the doctrine of Christ, and have our minds enlightened, enlarged, and sanctified, to know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent, whom to know aright is life eternal. Such knowledge it is the will of God we should cultivate. He has given us the capacity requisite to its attainment; blessed us with ample means for its prosecution, and so identified it with our happiness as to make it at once both our duty and interest.

Secondly. Let us learn to judge cautiously, righteously, and not from appearances only. If we would pronounce a fair and impartial judgment on any one, we must first ascertain his circumstances, motives, and intentions. We must weigh his actions; and if we are incompetent to this, we are not less so to pronounce judgment upon him.

If we suppose the adoption of this rule, so obviously Scriptural,

there would be at once an end of all unrighteous and of all uncharitable judging. Men would learn to speak cautiously of each other; would suspend their judgment frequently in the ordinary affairs of life, and much more in relation to those principles and habits which involve a man's reputation in this life, and his destiny in that to come. The Almighty has reserved to himself alone the tremendous right of pronouncing on the moral condition and final destiny of men. We may with perfect safety infer the general character of the tree from its foliage and fruit; but to say when, and how, it shall be cut down, belongs exclusively to the great Proprietor of the vineyard.

Let us, therefore, learn to be slow in judgment, and impartial in judging. "The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God." Let us not venture to anticipate the decisions of that day which shall try every man's work as by fire. Let us bear in mind, that we have all yet to be weighed in the balance of the divine law; and we are advertised beforehand, "With what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again."

Thirdly. Let us admire the perfection of Divine Providence. "He is a God of knowledge." "He is light, and in him is no darkness at all." From his high and holy habitation, where he dwells in glory ineffable, he *looks abroad* on the vast regions of space, swarming with systems, created, upheld, and directed by the word of his power. Thus we are taught in the word of God to contemplate the almighty Creator and Preserver of all, as presiding over and guiding the affairs of this great universe, however complicated in their arrangement, vast in the field of their operation, or protracted in the period of their existence.

He beholds, as the creature of his special care, each of the various systems that people the regions of space, and every world in each, in all their leading and subordinate arrangements, their various circumstances, their heaving oceans and murmuring rills; the different tribes of rational and irrational beings that inhabit them—that crowd their cities, that roam in their deserts or warble in their groves—with all their cares, their wants and sufferings, their hopes and fears, their joys and sorrows. He has not left our world to plunge its way through the regions of space, like a vessel in a stormy sea, without rudder, chart, or guide, a sport of warring winds and opposing tides; much less has he left its intelligent population as helpless orphans, unpitied and unprovided for, amid the abounding ills and ceaseless vicissitudes of life. A God of knowledge, he enters into the very minutia of our circumstances, bottles up our tears, and numbers the hairs of our head: he watches over our race with more than paternal tenderness. How vastly more cheering, reasonable, and sublime are these views of the divine character and government than any we can derive from the shriveled, cold, and heartless systems of modern infidelity. Who can hesitate to determine which is the more excellent? Christian, this God is our God for ever and ever. He will be our guide even unto death.

We have yet one reflection more; it is a reflection of deep and solemn import to the wicked. "The Lord is a God of knowledge,"

and "there is no might or counsel against him;" there is no darkness in which the votaries of iniquity can hide themselves. If they should dig into hell, thence would he bring them forth. There is no remote point in the regions of space to which the offender may retire, a voluntary exile from the displeasure of his God. God is everywhere. There is no power or strength in numbers, though even kings should set themselves; there is no wisdom or cunning in the policy of men, though even rulers take counsel together. What Jehovah has appointed that shall come to pass. He has appointed the day of trial, he has fixed the standard of value, and placed it before the world; and we all hasten to the period and the place where actions are weighed;—where actions are weighed in an even balance, held by an impartial hand, and in the sight and with the approval of the assembled universe. Then many things highly esteemed by men on earth will be regarded as a vile and loathsome abomination;—there, not only the outward act, but the secret principle of action, will be brought into view. Startling beyond all the anticipations of hope, or the forebodings of despair, will be the developments and disclosures attendant on that day of trial. There the child of earthly suffering and privation, whose spirit was sanctified by the blood of the cross, will shine forth, to the honor of divine grace, as a star in the kingdom of his Father; and there many who shone as stars amid the constellations of this world will disappear in the darkness of everlasting night! Men will be astonished to see how many of the great and prominent actors on the theatre of this life, the reputed wise and mighty, chief captains, and men of renown, will be received without ceremony, and judged without favor. How they will be weighed in the same balance with the ignoble throng—will be weighed by themselves, without their reputation, equipage, and earthly glory. The poor man without his poverty, and the rich man without his gold, will be weighed together, with their actions. These things will then be no further remembered than as they presented aids or difficulties in the performance of duty. Then it will not be so much what number of talents we had as how we improved them; not whether we were esteemed by men, but whether we esteemed and performed the will of God.

What, then, are our principles? Are we without charity, without pity, forbearance, or compassion, unforgiving and vindictive? Then, behold the law!—behold the eternal Judge!—behold the throne!—all proclaim, "With what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged, and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again." On the other hand, "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."

In view of these facts, let us watch and be sober, cultivate uprightness of intention and tenderness of spirit: let us seek, through the Lord Jesus Christ, such an assurance of the divine favor as will enable us to contemplate that day of trial with composure, with confidence, with transport; saying with the apostle, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus, and come quickly. Amen."

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ON THE IMPORTANCE OF A WELL INSTRUCTED MINISTRY.

BY REV. D. SMITH, OF THE NEW-YORK CONFERENCE.

THE progress of Methodism since its first establishment has been both constant and rapid. Unchanging and unaltered in its doctrines and aims, it has encountered the opposition, and fearlessly met the difficulties, incident to a young and rising denomination. Its doctrines and ecclesiastical organization have passed the ordeal of the most rigid scrutiny, both from friends and foes; and the result has been an increasing confidence, on the part of its friends, in the Scriptural character of those doctrines and the wisdom of those who, under Divine Providence, planned its system of operations. Men of a philosophic cast of mind looking back upon the anticipations and predictions* of the past, and contemplating the scene actually exhibited by the present, and forgetting withal that Methodism was a child of Providence—a fact which furnishes the only true solution of its unexampled success—are beginning to eulogize the wisdom and foresight of John Wesley in terms of the highest commendation. Indeed, were we only carried back a few centuries, we might soon expect to see a place assigned him in the Pantheon.

Leaving speculation, however, for those who can find no better employment, it becomes us to keep to *action*. This we must do, both to retain what we have already gained and to continue our advances. It has been already remarked, that we have full confidence in the Scriptural character of our doctrines and the excellence of our system of operations. By this latter member of the last sentence are meant the general features of our system of operations. Neither Mr. Wesley, nor any wise man among his followers, ever supposed that the system sprung complete and full-grown from his mind, as Minerva from that of Jupiter. If there was any one prominent trait in Mr. Wesley's own character, it was a disposition to take advantage of every favorable circumstance, and to enter every opening door of providence.

* "As to their leader," (Wesley,) says Rev. John Bennett, in his Letters to a Young Lady, originally dedicated to the queen, "he is doubtless a prodigy. An old man, of nearly ninety years, rising constantly at four o'clock in the depth of winter; preaching frequently on the same day; journeying from place to place, and from one people to another kingdom; himself the bishop, secretary, judge, and governor of his people. The main spring of such a vast and complicated machine is a phenomenon that will vanish from our earthly horizon when he ceases to exist. His opinions, it is said, do not injure his cheerfulness. Time has planted few wrinkles on his forehead, though it has covered his head with snow. Notwithstanding the religious zeal that works wonders in his favor, and the deference naturally paid to the first founder of a sect, particularly when possessed of any genius or learning, yet his peaceful government of so numerous a people, for such a length of time, is a proof of extraordinary talents and address. Whenever he dies, his disciples will dwindle. They will not easily agree about a successor. No successor can have so undisputed a sovereignty, or possess so undisputed a throne. They will separate from the Church, and the separation will be fatal." The above quotation is given as a specimen of the views entertained by those who undertook to predict the fate of Methodism, and as heralding to the future the opinions of former times.

To oppose all improvements, therefore, under the impression that we are contending for what is sometimes termed "old Methodism," would be to betray ignorance both of the genius of Methodism and the character of its founder. Mr. Wesley, guided by Scriptural principles, and on the basis of Scriptural doctrine, laid the *foundation* of a system of doing good to the souls of men, and expected his followers, not laying a *new* foundation, but building upon the old, would go on and complete the edifice.

We indeed should prepare but a poor compliment to be inscribed on the pages of our future history, should we do that from *choice* which was formerly done from *necessity*, and perpetuate all the *disadvantages* inevitably connected with an infant church. If Mr. Wesley or Bishop Asbury could appoint but a single laborer to a large field, and infant societies could only have preaching once a fortnight, are we, under altered and improved circumstances, to refuse a church, a regular ministry, and stated ordinances, for fear of departing from the ancient land-marks? If Mr. Wesley found himself unable to give the young men whom he employed to labor under his direction that assistance, in qualifying themselves for the work, which he desired, and was obliged to send them out with but slender acquirements—a necessity which he greatly lamented—must we continue to do the same for fear of coming under the charge of substituting learning for piety?

There are some of every age, and every church, who scent degeneracy and heresy the moment learning is named in connection with the ministry. Should there be found in our ranks a single individual of this class, to such a one we would say, Methodism originated in a college. Its founder was an instructor in one of the most venerable of literary institutions: himself a scholar of no ordinary acquirements—a close student through life, he ever prized learning as the handmaid of piety. In the midst of building churches, and at a time when the societies in connection with him had small pecuniary resources, with numerous claims to meet, he established an institution of learning, and took up yearly collections for its support.

So far was he, indeed, from desiring an illiterate ministry, that he sets down a *want of knowledge* in the ministry as one of the chief obstacles in the way of the progress of piety. In answer to the question, "Why is it that the people under our care are not better?" he answers, "Other reasons may concur, but the chief is, because we are not more knowing and more holy."

We have thought proper to offer these preliminary observations for the benefit of any whom they may concern, before proceeding more directly to the consideration of the topic named at the head of this article. Before, however, we proceed further, it may be proper to observe, that we have no thought of arrogating to ourselves the honor of starting a *new subject*. The man who should address the Methodist Episcopal Church, through one of her periodicals, as though she had yet to learn the importance of an intelligent ministry, would but betray his own ignorance and stupidity. The object of this sketch is simply to *aid in keeping alive* an important subject. It may meet the eye of some young men who are looking forward to the ministry, or of others who have just entered it; and

the writer will not conceal from them the fact, that for *their* benefit it is chiefly intended. We may then proceed to observe,

That the very nature of the ministerial office is such as to require a greater degree of knowledge than any other calling whatever. The minister is a *teacher*; and an *untaught teacher*, even in the lowest branch of elementary science, would be a solecism too gross for the reception of the most illiterate. He is not barely a teacher in the ordinary acceptation of that term, but a teacher of the most elevated character. There are gradations in science. Intellectual science rises above that of physics, and moral science is above intellectual. Theology embraces the other as its subordinate branches; but rising up into the spiritual world, and bringing man in contact with the Infinite mind, it takes a wider range, and occupies a more elevated position, than any other subject whatever. In the discharge of his high functions, the minister will find himself called back to the ages of antiquity; its history, civil jurisprudence, religion, manners, and customs, will all come in review before him. His Bible will lead him to the study of ancient geography, poetry, and language. It will call him into the wide field of morals; it will bring him in contact with man as an intellectual, social, moral, and immortal being, and raise his conceptions to the throne of the Eternal, to study his government and attributes. The bare idea of attempting these high subjects in a style of incoherent rhapsody, or attempting to bring them before a congregation in broken sentences and inappropriate terms, is revolting in the extreme. Well may it be said of such a work as that of the Christian ministry—

“No post on earth affords a place
Of equal honor or disgrace.”

We may learn the importance of a well instructed ministry from the practice of the founder of Christianity. I am well aware that superficial observers have supposed the Author of Christianity to have shown a decided preference for an illiterate ministry. “They were not the doctors of the law, the learned scribes, or men of wisdom, which he chose, but men from the fishing-boats of the sea of Galilee.” We grant all this; but does this argue aught in favor of an ignorant ministry? Did he not choose men of *very superior native talent*? and did he not keep them under his own immediate tuition for the space of *three years*? Besides all this, did he not endow them with supernatural gifts, enabling them to preach in the different languages of the people to whom they were sent? Still further, did he not put the seal of his approbation upon learning in the most decided manner, by employing the most learned man among them to pen fourteen of the epistles of the New Testament? And lest there should be any mistake on this point, did he not direct his apostle to commend study and improvement, in his inspired directions to Timothy? “Give attendance to *reading*.” “*Study* to show thyself approved unto God, a *workman that need not be ashamed*, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

The emergencies of the country require an intelligent ministry. The institutions of learning, our schools, academies, and colleges are, at present, chiefly in the hands, and under the guidance, of religious men. Following up the precedent set us by our pilgrim

forefathers, who erected the school-house and the church as some of the first buildings in their infant settlements, we have continued learning under the patronage of religion; and in this the ministry has taken the lead. Our success has justified the wisdom of both those who set and those who followed the example. A liberal government, laws characterized by simplicity and efficiency, a prosperous community, and a peaceful and flourishing religion, have been established. But *infidelity*, ever restless and reckless, having nothing to lose and every thing to gain by change, has of late shown symptoms bearing no equivocal character of a disposition to take the institutions of learning and the literature of the land into its own hands. It would hurl every minister from the seats of learning, and break at once and for ever the connection between the ministry and the forming of the minds of our youth. It would fain poison the fountains of intelligence, would write the books, edit the periodical literature of the day, and infuse itself into the entire mind of the nation.

If it could not get possession of the existing institutions of learning, it would destroy them; if it could not accomplish all by force, it would resort to stealth. If, coming in undisguised colors, its native ugliness should prove revolting, and it should be met by the glance of suspicion, it would be willing for a time to assume the garb of piety itself; and associating itself with the name of a free and easy religion, it would be willing to worship in the temples of Universalism, et cetera.

What would be the result should success crown the efforts of the secret and open foes of religion, we are at no loss to determine. France has already sat for the portrait: her infidel philosophers succeeded in corrupting the literature of the country, and then wrote out the true character and tendencies of their sentiments in the blood of the nation! "As the heathens fabled that Minerva issued full armed from the head of Jupiter, so no sooner were the speculations of atheistical philosophy matured than they gave birth to a ferocity which converted the most polished people in Europe into a horde of assassins—the seat of voluptuous refinement, of pleasure, and of arts, into a theatre of blood."

"The efforts of infidels to diffuse the principles of infidelity among the common people is an alarming symptom peculiar to the present time. Hume, Bolingbroke, and Gibbon addressed themselves solely to the more polished classes of the community, and would have thought their refined speculations debased by an attempt to enlist disciples from among the populace. Infidelity has of late grown condescending. Bred in the speculations of a daring philosophy, immured at first in the cloisters of the learned, and afterward nursed in the lap of voluptuousness and of courts, having at length reached its full maturity, it boldly ventures to challenge the suffrages of the people, solicits the acquaintance of peasants and mechanics, and seeks to draw whole nations to its standard."*

This picture, drawn originally with more special reference to Europe, is equally true of the actual state of things in the United States. A person not acquainted with the actual posture of affairs in our cities and villages, particularly among mechanics, would be

* Robert Hall's Sermon on Modern Infidelity.

surprised to learn with what diligence, (and generally by stealth,) infidel books and pamphlets have been circulated. They have been put into the hands of youth, and even children; and often, while their pious parents were praying for their conversion, the abettors of infidelity have been industriously poisoning their minds with the most insidious and destructive skepticism. Need it be added, that the emergencies of the times require not only a deeply pious and untiringly zealous, but also a well instructed ministry. We need men for this work well read in the evidences of revealed religion, able to draw the line of discrimination between the impostures of Mohammed and the truths of Christianity, between the lying wonders of paganism and popery and the miracles of Jesus, between the ambiguous oracles of heathenism and the inspired predictions of those men "who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." We need men able to unravel the dextrous coils of sophistry in which error enwraps itself; men, whose thorough acquaintance with man, not barely in the abstract, but as he thinks, feels, and acts in society, shall enable them to lay open the hidden springs of the human heart, and show his auditors themselves in true colors.

The general diffusion of knowledge among all classes of the community is such as imperatively demands an intelligent and well trained ministry. Let it be remembered, that "it is not so much the duty of ministers to follow examples as to set them." They occupy a conspicuous position. Their office leads them into the van of the advancing host. They are expected to be among the first in whatever advances the general good. Under these circumstances for a minister to possess a mind untrained and destitute of mental furniture is to expose himself to mortification, and his office and character to contempt. A mental sluggard in his study, he will be a blunderer in the pulpit, and will soon be considered as an intruder into the sacred office by his brethren, while he will be set up as a laughing-stock by even school-boys.

The same qualifications which would have enabled a minister to pass very well thirty years since, will not answer for these times. Institutions of learning were not then multiplied as at present; and those that did exist, particularly the elementary schools, did not compare with those now in operation. With the improvements already made, and those projected and in progress, no inconsiderable share of science is likely to be brought to every man's door. History, the philosophy of language, geometry, chemistry, natural philosophy, the elements of astronomy, physiology, the elements of moral and intellectual science, and composition, are already taught in some of our common schools, and likely soon to be quite generally introduced. Books on all these subjects are multiplied, and cheap. Now no proposition in mathematics is more demonstrable than that the ministry, the public teachers of religion, must keep in advance of the general intelligence of society, or lose its influence over the public mind. The same acquirements which pass at present will not do twenty years hence. The progress of learning in the ministry must be onward; and those whom it may concern will do well to look to it that they do not introduce mere "novices" in learning into the sacred office.

The state of the nation demands an intelligent and influential ministry. In this country every thing is in motion. Nothing seems so permanently settled as not to be subject to frequent fluctuation. Towns, villages, states, and even nations, are rising up around us, as if by the influence of magic. Not only whole families, but nearly whole neighborhoods are found removing from one part of the continent to another. Let any one mark the line of our seaboard, where thousands of emigrants are pouring in from the old world; let him trace our great thoroughfares, our rivers, railroads, canals, and turnpikes; let him look into our public vehicles; let him look at the waves of our population rolling westward; let him turn his eye to Texas, where a nation, "like a young giant, is rushing up to manhood;" let him not forget the Oregon territory, where the germ of a nation has already made its appearance; let him also take into account the mania for speculation and money-making with which this nation has already run mad; and then, remembering that the gospel ministry, with the subordinate agencies under its control, is to be the chief instrument in infusing the moral elements which are to guide and save the millions spreading over this vast continent, let him ask himself, if a ministry endowed with gifts both solid and durable, as well as grace burning and self-sacrificing, is not required to meet the emergencies of the times.

The condition of our own beloved Zion—our own branch of the church—requires a well instructed ministry. As a church, we have grown up with unparalleled rapidity. Providence sent Methodism to these shores, and Providence opened "a great and effectual door" before it. It is within the memory of men still living when there was not a Methodist church in the United States. Now our numbers are greater than those of any other evangelical church within the limits of the nation. A necessary consequence attendant upon our rapid growth is that, until quite recently, we have not been able to turn our attention to the promotion of the cause of education to any considerable extent. The result was, that those of our youth who were in pursuit of an education were obliged to seek it in institutions under the influence and control of other denominations. As might be expected, many became alienated, or were drawn from us. The ranks of our ministry were often impoverished by young men of piety and promise going out among others to seek literary advantages which we could not give them, and finally connecting themselves with other ecclesiastical bodies.

To see our young men drawn from us in this way—young men for whom we had labored and prayed, and over whom we had rejoiced as children born into our spiritual household, was by no means agreeable. We felt that it was due to them and ourselves to make provision for them. Moreover, we felt bound also in honor, and by Christian principle, to contribute of the ability which we at length possessed in advancing the general cause of education. Accordingly we have succeeded in establishing seminaries of learning, academies and colleges, under our own patronage and influence. These institutions have rapidly filled up; they have been favored by the God of providence, and blessed by the Spirit of divine grace. The result has already been of a very cheering character.

But the point had in view at the commencement of these obser-

vations, and which is of the utmost moment, is this : *These institutions are fast raising up among us an intelligent and well instructed laity, and one which will expect and require a corresponding ministry.* It is vain, under any circumstances, to expect an intelligent laity will sit under an uninformed ministry.

We therefore reiterate the sentiment, the minister must keep ahead of his auditors. If he do not, he will inevitably lose his influence over the most influential and valuable of his hearers, and drive them into other churches. For ourselves, we are fully convinced that the ministry of our church is capable of being one of the most efficient on the face of the earth. Let us maintain and improve our piety ; let us retain our simplicity and zeal ; let us be pastors, as well as preachers ; let us continue, as from the beginning, the spirit of self-sacrifice ; let us never give up our impassioned style of address, but continue to speak as though we were in earnest ; and then let us follow out the intention of Mr. Wesley who penned, and our fathers who adopted, the rule found in section xvi, pages 59 and 60 of our Discipline ; let us get all the learning we can, particularly that which more immediately concerns our calling, and the followers of Wesley will be second in efficiency to none on earth. "It was once remarked of the preachers of the Methodist Church by a learned infidel, that, were they only panoplied in the literary armor which is worn by the preachers of some other sects, they would, in five years, make a conquest of the world." Were we panoplied in all the literary armor the world could furnish, and did we possess the unction and energy of a Paul, we should not probably be favored with so sudden and extensive a conquest as this eulogy of our zeal would imply. But, with the learning and zeal which we may call to our aid, we may be privileged with acting a successful part, at least, in the great warfare against sin and the powers of darkness.

As to the *means* of bringing about an improvement, and meeting the wants of the church in the particular which forms the subject of this article, that must be left to those who may be selected to represent the church in her highest ecclesiastical council, and to the bishops and annual conferences. The writer may, however, be permitted to observe, that if there could be *a greater number of examinations of the candidates for sacred orders among us, and if they could be more thorough, it would be for the mutual advantage of all concerned.* Why should there not be a rule requiring an examination into the *literary acquirements*, as well as the piety and native gifts, of those who ask a recommendation to the annual conferences from the quarterly conferences ? This could be done either before the quarterly conference, or before a committee, by the presiding elder ; or in case he should not be present, or should desire it, by some senior minister ; or some one or two ministers, with the presiding elder, might do it. Then, why should not the examinations be extended to four years, instead of two ? And, again, why not examine candidates every year, and report upon their cases to the conference ? Our system, too, might, with advantage to the church, require four years' probation before admission into full connection. It would then be a year shorter than that required by our Wesleyan brethren.

It is certainly no advantage to the young men themselves to find their way into our annual conferences too easy. They need something to arouse their energies, and call out their powers. To throw them upon their own resources at the outset of their ministerial career is one of the best things in the world for them. Some of the most pious and intelligent among them would be among the first to ask for more thorough and frequent examinations. They feel the want of a spur to assist them in overcoming the mental sluggishness common, in a greater or less degree, to all.

In connection with the qualifications required for admission into our conferences, it should be remembered that we are not like other churches in our ecclesiastical organization. They induct a man into their ministry, and send him off to seek a field of labor where he can find one. They throw him upon his own resources, and let him sink or swim, as he can. We take a man, and agree to find him a field of labor, and must sink or swim with him. If he be incompetent, we share the results. If a church or circuit run down under him, we must go and build it up. If he scatter a congregation, we must pay the penalty, and go and get it together, if we can, even though we have not bread to eat or a coat to wear while doing it. If we labor until flesh and blood complain, and lungs and nerves cry out, under the pressure of our burden, and incompetent men are among us, they may be our successors to blight and prostrate all we have done. Is it, therefore, unreasonable that we ask for such a system of trial and examination as shall let us know whom we are to vote into our ranks? *An itinerant ministry not well guarded must inevitably sink by its own weight.*

In closing this article, the writer cannot do better than to transcribe the following extracts from a small volume, lying before him, entitled "The Ministry we need," published by Taylor & Gould, New-York, 1835. After describing the ministry which the church demands, the author* observes:—"If it be said, that this exhibition is, on the whole, appalling, disheartening to our youth—I answer, The standard will always be low enough in practice, without sinking it in theory. Besides, it will be found on experiment to be a great deal cheaper to get competent knowledge than to go without it. No man knows what he can do till he tries; and he never will attempt great things if he has no adequate motive. If a man aims low, his skill is generally of that sort that he hits his mark; and in consequence the archer is as low as the archery: he conforms himself to a standard ignoble and degrading. If a young man knows not his weakness, it is equally true that he knows not his strength; and shall his self-ignorance, in any respect, be allowed to legislate for the church respecting the quality of her approved ministry? He needs to be encouraged, assisted, and enlarged. If in lower offices innumerable men task themselves to grand achievements, and succeed, why not in that profession which in importance, in profit, in peril, in courage, in magnificence, in usefulness, in responsibility, in solemnity, in glory, has nothing equal to it in the universe of human pursuits? What has ignorance to do in the sacred office? God is not the patron of darkness. He has none of it in his own nature, and near his altars there should be perpetual light. A

* Dr. Cox.

minister of Christ is expressed emphatically by the metaphor of a *star*. Why? Obviously because he is appropriately a luminary in the world—

‘Mid upper, nether, and surrounding darkness.’

Its lodgment is a *candlestick*—a church lightened with its heavenly brilliancy, and upholding its pure and steady radiations.”

There is a generous enthusiasm worthy of any bosom—indigenous to the purest, and inspired by that philosophy which sees things as they are. It ought to be encouraged and cultivated in every minister and every candidate. The aspirations of piety, the promise of intellect, and the stamps of vocation from above, are all involved in it. Yet for the same reason that piety is not all in the qualifications for the ministry, the mind must be stored, regulated, ripened, fully and correctly, or a brief and unfruitful career at best may be ordinarily predicted. There is special need of such preparation, all the more where there is excellence of capacity and adaptation of gifts connected with distinguished zeal. The greater momentum of the powers is only the more perilous without proportionate and balancing concomitants, verifying the poetry of the Roman satirist:—

“Vis consilii expers mole ruit sua.”

“The finest energy, devoid
Of wisdom, soon is self-destroy’d.”

For the Methodist Magazine and Quarterly Review.

JACOB'S DREAM; OR, THE MINISTRY OF ANGELS.

A Discourse on Genesis xxviii, 12.

“And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it.”

THE narrative of which this passage forms a conspicuous part presents a striking instance of that vigilant oversight which God takes of his creatures. This has been called by some his general providence; and perhaps the term *general* may be allowed, as a collective term, embracing all the individual interpositions of the Rector of the universe with regard to his creatures. It may also be used to denote the fact, that the providence of God extends to all the creatures that people his wide domain. But, while we admit that the providence of God extends to all his creatures, we have reason to believe that it is peculiarly interested in the concerns of rational beings, and that among them mankind have received no small amount of the divine regard. In view of this the patriarch asks, “What is man that thou shouldest magnify him? and that thou shouldest set thine heart upon him? and that thou shouldest visit him every morning, and try him every moment?” Job vii, 17, 18. And a similar question is

proposed by the psalmist, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?" *Psa. viii, 4.* This great concern for man is manifested doubtless because of his superior nature and exalted destiny.

Among the children of men there are some who share more largely than others in God's providential regards. This is, no doubt, on account of the conspicuous part which they are called to perform in the great drama of life.

Among these we may reckon the hero of our subject. From his very birth he was marked by the special regards of Heaven; and these regards seemed ever to follow him, notwithstanding many of his acts in early life were calculated to defeat the purposes of God concerning him. The circumstances which surround him in the paragraph of his history which lies before us are peculiarly gloomy. By two acts of subtlety—for which, by the way, he was remarkable—he had well nigh incurred the forfeiture of his life. He first supplanted his brother in the matter of his birthright, and then with regard to the paternal blessing. On account of these things Esau resolved to slay him. Upon hearing this, his mother devised means to save his life. She adopted the following expedient:—After apprizing Jacob of his danger, she went to Isaac, and pretended to him that she was weary of her life because of the daughters of Heth, among whom Esau had married, and insinuated that she was apprehensive that Jacob would make a selection for a wife among them also. Upon which her uxorious husband gave Jacob permission to visit his grandfather at Padan-aram, and to marry one of his own cousins.

While on his journey he was benighted at a certain place, "and he took the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep. And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set upon the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven; and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it." And behold the Lord stood above it, and made an address to Jacob; which, with the vision of the ladder and the angels, proved to him that, though a fugitive, and apparently alone, yet he was still surrounded by the ever-watchful providence of God. For when he awoke, he exclaimed, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not! How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven. And he called the name of that place Beth-el."

While this narrative shows, in a beautiful and striking manner, the providence of God, that passage of it which heads this discourse shows us one of the methods by which God exerts his providence toward men; to wit, *by the ministry of angels.*

Indeed, some have considered Jacob's ladder as typical of the Lord Jesus Christ, in whom both worlds meet, and in whom the divine and human natures are conjoined; and they suppose that our Lord applies this vision in this way himself:—

First. In his address to Nathanael, "Hereafter ye shall see the heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of man," *John i, 11.* Secondly. In his speech to Thomas, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me," *John xiv, 6.* The vision *may* have this typical reference, and our Lord's speech to Nathanael may have allusion to the

vision. But really I cannot see how that speech can support the typical application of the vision, which I should rather suppose has exclusive reference to the ministry of angels. As to Christ's address to Thomas, I do not think that that excellent passage has any reference at all to Jacob's vision. But that this vision was intended to point out the intercourse between heaven and earth by the ministry of angels, seems sufficiently manifest from the accompanying history, as well as sundry other passages of Scripture, and particularly Heb. i, 14, "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?"

Thus Jacob was ministered unto by angels; and he became the heir of salvation, by inheriting the promises contained in the covenant which God made with Abraham, Isaac, and afterward with himself.

In this discourse we have nothing to do with the nature of angels. We shall suppose them to be exclusively spiritual beings, in opposition to Clemens Alexandrinus, Origen, Tertullian, and others; and also that they are holy, wise, and powerful, though finite intelligences.

Let us consider the objects of their ministry.

Although the apostle says, that they are "sent forth to minister for them who shall be the heirs of salvation"—and none are the heirs of eternal salvation but the children of God; yet we are not to suppose that the ministry of good angels is *confined* to the righteous. "I will not say," says a favorite writer, "that they do not minister at all to those who, through their obstinate impenitence and unbelief, disinherit themselves of the kingdom. This world is a world of mercy, wherein God pours down many mercies, even on the evil and the unthankful; and many of these, it is very probable, are conveyed even to them by the ministry of angels; especially so long as they have any thought of God, or fear of God, before their eyes. But it is their favorite employ, their peculiar office, to minister to the heirs of salvation—to those who are now 'saved by faith,' or, at least, seeking God in sincerity."

One object of the ministry of angels is, doubtless, to convey information to God's people with respect to those subjects which are more immediately connected with their interests. Even the heathen were of opinion that some superior intelligences were employed in this work. Hence Socrates says, "My demon gives me notice every morning of the evil which may befall me that day." This may be branded as enthusiastic superstition; but it shows that the wise and virtuous among the heathens, not only recognized a rank of intelligences which answers to angelic spirits, but also believed that they were employed in communicating information, which, while it was interesting to, was otherwise above the reach of those to whom this information was given.

Indeed, we are not to be too hasty in supposing this idea of Socrates to be superstitious. One whom no man will charge with enthusiasm—a greater than Socrates—when, with his fellow-voyagers, exposed to the dangers of shipwreck, declared, "There stood by me, this night, the angel of God—saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Cesar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee," Acts xxvii, 24. I need not add the prediction was realized.

It is remarkable, that many of the most sublime revelations which were ever made to the world were made through the instrumentality of angels. It is more than probable that that was an angel whom Ezekiel (chap. xl, 3) describes as a man, whose appearance was like the appearance of brass, and by whom the plan of the prophet's enigmatical temple was drawn. It was the angel Gabriel that revealed to Daniel that important and most glorious prophecy of the seventy weeks, which determined the period of our Lord's sacrifice—and the succeeding prophecies which refer to the state of the church during the reign of Antichrist, and of her final triumph over all her foes. It was the same Gabriel who "stands in the presence of God," ready to be sent to communicate glad tidings to men, who revealed to Zacharias the birth of the Baptist, and to the blessed Virgin the birth of him who was to be a "light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of his people Israel." And in those scenic representations of things that were and are to come, which are found in the Apocalypse, angels bear a prominent part. *They* sound the trumpets; *they* pour out the vials; *they* proclaim the day of vengeance on the enemies of the church, and the conquests and final triumph of him who is called the Word of God. Now, surely, it is not a vain thought to suppose that these celestial intelligences are still employed in similar services for man. We grant that the age of prophecy has ceased—miraculous interferences may have ceased also. But man still stands in need of celestial guidance. While he is in the present state of existence he wants continual instruction and superintendence; and it is more than probable that God frequently condescends to instruct and guide him by angelic ministrations, "causing his angel to go before him to lead him in the way."

Another design of the ministry of angels is the defence of the people of God. Defence implies danger—and the source of this danger may be found in evil angels and evil men. Of the former there are innumerable hosts; for, like the locusts of the east, "they throng the air, and darken heaven." Of the latter, we may say, with David, "Ten thousands of people have set themselves against us round about." The combined powers of earth and hell compose an army at once numerous, subtle, diligent, and powerful. In view of which we may well say, with the young man in Scripture story, who exclaimed, when he beheld the great Syrian host, with their horses and chariots, encompassing him and the prophet around about, "Alas! my master, how shall we do?" But, if our eyes were opened, we should be able to answer our own interrogatory, for we should behold the place around us full of horses and chariots of fire. (2 Kings vi.) These are that great host of the angels of God which encamp around the righteous to deliver them. (Psa. xxxiv, 7.) Yes; they are the angels of God's deliverance to his people; for they assume a belligerent attitude toward those wicked spirits in high places whose influence is adverse to the church of Christ. We have a remarkable proof of this in the Apocalypse, chap. xii, 7, &c., "And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he

was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him." O! what a warfare was that warfare! How terrible the combatants! Spirits of light and spirits of darkness! The principalities and powers of heaven and hell! And what a battle-field—the region of the atmospheric heavens! Here they met; here was the arena where they fought the dreadful fight! A bloodless fight, for spirits warred! Here was the dragon vanquished—here were his hosts subdued—here did the powers of heaven prove victorious over all the hosts of hell—and here was a great deliverance wrought for the people of God!

And are not these holy angels continually employed in counter-working the powers of darkness? How frequently do they frustrate their schemes of malice—overcome their strength—and circumscribe their range? The holy Daniel knew their power to save when, in the lions' den, he exclaimed, "My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me!" Dan. vi, 22. This Peter knew—for, when thrust into prison by his enemies, bound with chains, and watched by soldiers, a light shone into his dungeon, and he beheld a celestial visitant, who, in spite of soldiers, and chains, and bars, and gates, delivered the apostle out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews. (Acts xii.)

And although the agency of angels, in this particular, be not now so ostensible as formerly, yet we may rest assured it is not less real, and not less effectual. For, were it not for this, or a similar defence, this earth would not be tenable, except to those who are lying in the wicked one, and then he would torment before the time!

But may not angels be also employed in administering consolations to the afflicted, and in enabling them to bear up under the ills of life? True; they cannot *properly* sympathize with us in our sorrows, for they themselves never tasted the cup of wo. But they can mark our distress—they can trace it to its source—and by God's permission, and at his command, they may whisper consolation to our hearts. They may apply the precious promises to our souls, and enable us to taste more fully the powers of the world to come. They may quicken our love, and increase our courage, by reminding us of that vast cloud of witnesses which have preceded us in passing through this vale of tears. Let none say this is airy speculation.

If we are tempted in all points like our Master, may we not expect to be comforted with the same consolations wherewith he himself was comforted of God? And was not he comforted by the ministry of angels? See him in the wilderness, after his long fasting and protracted temptation. As a man, his spiritual and physical energies are near prostration; but, "behold, angels came and ministered unto him," Matt. iv. And when he was called upon to drink the cup of wo—when the ponderous load of a world's iniquity was about to be laid upon him—when his feeble flesh shrunk back from the trial, and "abhorred to bear the wrath of an offended God"—when he was heard to pray, "Father, if thou be willing, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done"—then "there appeared unto him an angel from heaven strengthening him," Luke xxii, 43. One of those celestial beings that thousands of years before he had called into existence, and that shouted for joy when by his power the world was created—probably Gabriel himself, who was so interested

at his incarnation—now appears to assist him in his passion! Yes; to assist him—not, indeed, to tread with him the wine-press—for of the people, whether angelic or human, there was none with him in this work—but to strengthen his humanity, by revealing to him the joy that was set before him, in prospect of which he was enabled to “endure the cross, despising the shame.”

We said that angels cannot sympathize with us in affliction, because they never suffered themselves. This remark will hold good with respect alone to those eldest sons of Deity that have ever been residents of the world of bliss. But the Scripture calls others angels besides them. Disembodied spirits, because they are made like unto the angels of God in heaven, are therefore termed angels. And how far these may sympathize with us in affliction we cannot tell. Many of them went up through great tribulation, and they cannot but remember their *own* trials; and, as they are benevolent beings, they cannot be regardless of *ours*. They consider us the junior members of that great family which is divided between earth and heaven. They are not ashamed to call us brethren. It must have been very gratifying to the apostle, when banished to a dreary island in the Egean sea, to receive the visits of a glorified saint, and to hear him say, “I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book.”

Indeed, they are not only with us servants of the heavenly King; but, whether earth-born or heaven-born,

“Angels *our* servants are,
And keep in all our ways.”

“For he hath given his angels charge concerning us; and in their hands they shall bear us up, lest at any time we dash our foot against a stone,” Matt. iv, 6: and no doubt our departed friends, who are made like unto the angels, obtain

“The grace to angels given
To serve the royal heirs of heaven!”

While we are passing through this vale of tears, and following them who through faith and patience now inherit the promises, they are not unmoved at our afflictions—they do not fail to obtain permission of God to sympathize with us in our sufferings. If the lost sinner was concerned for his five brethren yet upon earth, and was desirous that they should escape from that place of torment to which he was doomed; surely our friends in paradise are not regardless of the afflictions of “their fellow-servants and brethren” upon the earth.

And it may not be amiss to remark, that they not only administer to us in affliction and trial, but also in seasons of comfort and prosperity. They rejoice with them that do rejoice. As they tune their harps, and sound their joyful notes, when one sinner repenteth; so, by analogy, we conclude that they delight to swell the note of holy rapture which breaks forth from the Christian's heart when he is *riding upon his high places*, and rejoicing in hope of the glory of God. It is impossible to determine how much they may advance our happiness, by their secret, mysterious operations upon the soul.

From what has been already said, we may discover the objects which angels have in view in their visits to this earth. But Jacob

saw them ascending as well as descending on that mystic ladder which he beheld in his vision. Now we may readily conceive that these winged intelligences are employed to bear the news of earth to heaven, as well as the news of heaven to earth. The angels are celestial *couriers*—their name imports as much. They fly over the earth—behold its inhabitants—their variegated circumstances—return to the celestial world, and there make known the result of their mission: and as they are not omniscient nor omnipresent beings, this is the only way by which they can arrive at a knowledge of what passes upon earth.

It is certain that every sinner's repentance is a cause of joy in the presence of the angels of God in heaven. Now they must be acquainted with the fact before they can rejoice at its occurrence. And as these facts are constantly occurring in different parts of the world, therefore there is constant need of these celestial spies ascending the ladder in order to convey the pleasing news to heaven; and this they can do with telegraphic despatch—for God hath made "his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire."

Natural philosophy informs us, that a ray of light can travel at the astonishing rate of 194,188 miles in one second of time—and that it comes to us from the sun, a distance of 95,513,794 miles, in the short space of $8\ 11\frac{43}{50}''$. And we have reason to believe that ministering spirits move with equal, or indeed greater celerity. Did not one of the seraphim fly almost as quick as thought from the temple of God in heaven to the prophet on earth, to consecrate him to the prophetic office. There is a remarkable account in the history of Bel and the Dragon, in the Apocrypha, which, although it may not be true in fact, will nevertheless show the opinion of the ancient Jews on this subject. Here the angel of the Lord is represented as taking the Prophet Habakkuk by the hair of his head, and, in "the vehemence of his spirit," transferring him in a moment from Jewry to Babylon: and then "the angel of the Lord set Habakkuk in his own place again immediately!" And, doubtless, in their upward flight, from earth to heaven, they move with equal swiftness—for the King's business requireth haste. Besides, they are anxious to make their reports to their sister spirits in glory; and we may well imagine how full of interest these reports must be, especially to the spirits of just men made perfect in paradise. But we must clip the wings of our imagination. We must not lift too high the veil which separates us from the most holy place.

There is another reason why angels are found ascending, as well as descending, the ladder Jacob saw. They minister to the heirs of salvation, by conveying their ransomed spirits to the world of bliss. No sooner has the soul cast off her mortal coil than angels spread their golden pinions to bear their "sister spirit" far away from earth to "mingle with the blaze of day!" They go in *bands* to "the chamber where the good man meets his fate;" they hover around his dying couch: they wait to hear pronounced, "A man is dead!" then they are ready to respond, "A child is born!" They seize the prize, and bear it through the trackless ether, and place it at the Saviour's feet!

Behold that poor, despised, afflicted man, reduced to the extreme of life by complicated ills, Heaven signs, and death executes his release

from earth. The beggar dies—and, lo! he is carried by angels into Abraham's bosom. The infantile spirit, like the nestling eaglet, having not yet tried her pinions, mounts on those of angels, which bear her aloft, as the eaglet is borne upon the eagle's wings!

But there is yet another object of the ministry of angels. They are to be sent forth, on the last day, to "gather together God's elect from the four winds of heaven." By the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God, the "dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed;" and angels are to be our escort when we are "caught up to meet our Lord in the air, to be for ever with the Lord."

Our conquering Head was thus conducted to the skies. When he ascended up on high he was accompanied by the chariots of God, which are twenty thousand, even thousands of thousands of angels. *Psa. lxxviii, 17, 18.* They sung, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in!" *Psa. xxxiv, 7.* And in like manner will they convey his ransomed people home. They will then exclaim, "Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation, which keepeth the truth, may enter in," *Isa. xxvi, 2.*

This will be their last and most glorious ascension. The people of Christ, being all redeemed from earth, will be angels' companions in heaven. Yes! and, in return for their services, they will communicate to angels a knowledge of those Christian mysteries which they now have a "desire to look into:" and thus "unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places shall be made known by the church the manifold wisdom of God," *Eph. iii, 10.*

From what we have said on this subject, we may learn, 1. The feelings which we ought to entertain toward these exalted intelligences. We should respect them, and esteem them very highly in love for their works' sake. But we must not worship them. No; nor must we trust in them as mediators. These are errors of pagan origin, into which many, both ancient and modern, have unfortunately fallen. The Romans considered their *genii*, and the Greeks their *demons*, subaltern deities and mediators; and accordingly Plato himself enjoined his disciples to honor and worship them. And the ancient Jews were also infected with this dangerous superstition. This appears from *Tobit xii, 12, 15*, where his ethereal companion is made to address Tobias' father in the following language:—"I am Raphael, one of the seven holy angels, which present the prayers of the saints. When thou didst pray, and Sara thy daughter-in-law, I did bring the remembrance of your prayers before the Holy One."

Philo, the Jew, has also this remarkable passage. Speaking of these celestial beings, he says:—"They are the presidents of the princes of the Almighty, like the eyes and ears of some great king, beholding and hearing all things. These the philosophers call *demons*; but the holy Scriptures call them *angels*, and that most properly—for they carry the Father's commands to the children, and the children's wants to the Father; and therefore the Scripture represents them as ascending and descending. Not that he needs such intelligence, who beforehand knows all things; but because it is more expedient for us mortals to make use of such mediators, that we may the more admire and reverence the Supreme Governor and the great power of his government.

From a sense hereof we desired a mediator: 'Speak thou to us, but let not God speak to us lest we die.'" This is a beautiful passage, but it contains a dangerous heresy.

To this heresy the Christians at Colosse were exposed, as appears from the apostle's caution:—"Let no man beguile you of your reward, in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels," Col. ii, 18. And it is well known how egregiously the Latin and Greek Churches have erred on this point. They have many gods, and many mediators. It is true, they tell us that they do not allow supreme adoration to any but God, and offer only inferior adoration to all besides. Hence they divide their worship into *λατρεία* and *δουλία*; the former of which they render to God, and the latter to saints and angels. But, as Mr. Saurin well remarks, "The Scripture does not distinguish, as some divines with so little reason do, many sorts of religious adoration. We do not find there the distinction of the worship of *Latria* from the worship of *Dulia*; but *religious* adoration is distinguished from civil adoration." And we might add, that as this is the only distinction which obtains in the Scripture, and as it would be *folly* to offer angels civil adoration unless they were visibly present with us; so it would be *idolatry* to offer them *religious* worship, for this belongs to God alone. We must never forget, that "there is but one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus," 1 Tim. ii, 5. Angels are but ministering spirits—servants of God, and servants of men. They are not the objects of religious *trust*, as though they were *mediators*—nor of religious *worship*, as though they were *deities*. We must remember that *the Lord stood above the ladder*, while "the angels of God were ascending and descending *on it*!" If God has chosen to make them his *agents*, we must not make them his *rivals*!

2. From the ministry of angels, let us learn, secondly, a lesson of humility and active benevolence. When they are not directly employed in striking their harps of praise before the throne of God in heaven, they are engaged in errands of mercy to the sons of men on earth. And their *visits* are not, as they have been represented, *few and far between*. But, like the Saviour of the world, *they go about doing good*. And this earth is the grand theatre of their benevolent operations. They make no invidious distinctions between the rich and the poor. They do not forsake the hovels of the wretched, and, "like the world, their ready visit pay where fortune smiles." No! but while they visit Abraham the patriarch at Mamre, they visit Lazarus also at the rich man's gate. They are not above discharging the most menial offices toward the children of men. Let this teach us that true dignity is not incompatible with the performance of the meanest services of good will toward our fellow-creatures.

Would we resemble angels? Let us visit the haunts of poverty—the hovels of distress—"the fatherless and the widow in their affliction—and keep ourselves unspotted from the world!" Nothing can lower our dignity but sin. Nothing can exalt our character so much as pure benevolence and heaven-born humility. And for the present, laying aside every other motive, let us seek to be filled with the former, and clothed with the latter, "because of the angels," 1 Cor. xi, 10.

3. From the ministry of angels, let us learn, thirdly, the security of the people of God. "What can harm us if we be followers of that

which is good?" Is not the Lord *of hosts* with us? Are not the armies of the living God stationed around us like a munition of rocks? If legions of wily fiends oppose us, "cannot we pray to our Father, and will he not presently give us more than twelve legions of angels for our defence?" Matt. xxvi, 53. We have strong consolations and a sure support.

Angels were, probably, seen as they came down upon the mountain, when the law was given by their "disposition;" but the Israelites could not come nigh unto them because of the terrors of Sinai. "But *we* are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel," Heb. xii, 22, &c.

"Therefore, with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious name, evermore praising thee—and saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts! heaven and earth are full of thy glory! Glory be to thee, O Lord most high! Amen."

STANZAS.

"Bless the Lord, ye, his angels."—Psalms.

"And let all the angels of God worship him."—Hebrews.

WHEN earth began to be—
This earth, which loud declares
Her Maker's majesty,
Ye glorious morning stars
With praises glow'd.
Your shouting joy
Knew no alloy,
Ye sons of God!

When th' incarnate God
In Beth'hem did appear,
New joys ye flung abroad
On the nocturnal air;
His natal day
Ye oped with songs:
Him your glad tongues
Did homage pay!

When on the fatal tree
The Saviour hung accurst—
When ye desired to see
Into those things, ye first
Smother'd each flame,
Each harp unstrung;
But soon ye sung,
"Worthy the Lamb!"

When high the conqu'ror flew,
Shouting o'er death and hell,
Ye then were ready too
His victories to tell.
His upward way
With songs ye strew'd;
Spontaneous flow'd
Each choicest lay!

And when a sinner turns
Repentant to his God,
Your rapture newly burns—
Your songs ye sound abroad.
Your pinions bear
The news on high,
And with your joy
Ye rend the air!

And when the realms of earth
Shall own their rightful King,
And sound abroad their mirth,
Ye too with them shall sing—
With them prolong,
Around the throne
Of the Three-One,
Th' eternal song! S.

For the Methodist Magazine and Quarterly Review.

GOD'S WORD THE CHRISTIAN'S DELIGHT.

"O how love I thy law!"—Psa. cxix, 97.

BY REV. R. W. ALLEN, OF THE NEW-ENGLAND CONFERENCE.

[Continued from page 215.]

II. *This law claims our increasing attachment.*

This is more than intimated in the text: "O how love I thy law!" His attachment to this law had become exceedingly great; so great, that he said—"I do not forget thy law." "Thy law is my delight." "Mine eyes prevent the *night* watches, that I might meditate in thy word." Of every Christian it may be affirmed, "In his law doth he meditate day and night." That this law claims our increasing attachment is evident—

From its divine origin. That the Scriptures containing this law are from God, the Christian fully believes. This truth is one of the fundamental articles of his religion. But, though unnecessary to prove to the Christian that the Scriptures are divine, still it may not be amiss to notice some of those arguments by which this doctrine is supported. It may serve to increase his attachment to the sacred volume. As it respects the infidel and skeptic, we do not enter upon the subject with much expectation of convincing them of their error; for if what has been said on the subject in the multiplicity of elaborate and able works now before the public fails to convince them, but little can reasonably be hoped from what we may offer. We hope, however, *all* will candidly, seriously, and prayerfully, consider the subject.

We shall, in the first place, attempt to prove the divine origin of the Scriptures from the character of the writers themselves. That the Scriptures were written by *men* is admitted on all hands, infidels not excepted. It then remains to be shown what kind of men the writers were. They must, of course, have been either *good* or *bad* men. That they were good men—men of strict integrity and deep piety—(and we shall show, in the sequel, that they were inspired men)—appears from the following considerations:—

1. *The religion which they inculcated and urged upon the minds of their readers and hearers, was directly opposed to the principles and practice of mankind in all ages.* The religion of Moses was opposed to that of the *Egyptians*. He nobly and voluntarily relinquished all right to the regal crown, divested himself of all the pomp, glories, emolument, and aggrandizement of Egypt; *for he refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter*; identified himself with the cause of God's suffering people: *His people shall be my people*, and with unshaken fortitude exposed the sins and vicious practices of the people. Now, what could have influenced Moses to such unconquerable courage and faithfulness in exposing the popular vices and corruptions of the age, had he not been a man of God, *having respect unto the recompense of reward*? Obloquy, reproach, calumny, and exquisite suffering were all that he could reasonably expect from the people, while, at the same time, he relinquished all hope of secular interest and worldly preferment. Such a course must be inexplicable on the ground that he was an impostor. What could have induced the patriarchs and prophets to seek the entire overthrow of the systems of wickedness of their day, had they not possessed the character which they claimed? And would the evangelists and apostles have fearlessly met the unholy prejudices and sins of the people, had they not possessed unshaken confidence in the promises of Jehovah? Would they have inculcated a religion, and urged its universal reception by motives drawn from heaven and hell, diametrically opposed to the principles and conduct of their hearers and readers, had they only aimed at deception? Were impostors ever known to act in this way? But, if they had confederated to impose upon mankind, it is incredible that none of their associates should not have confessed it. They had nothing to gain by obtruding falsehoods; but, on the contrary, they were exposed to the loss of every thing, even life itself, for preaching the doctrine of the cross, and bearing witness to the truth of Christianity. It is also utterly incredible that so many precepts of piety and virtue should have been delivered by men of such abandoned principles as they must have been, had they really been impostors. If the apostles and evangelists had designed to impose upon mankind, they would have accommodated themselves to the humors of the people whom they addressed, and would carefully have avoided whatever might shock or offend them; whereas they acted in quite a different manner. Now, who can for a moment believe, that the sacred writers, considering the doctrines and precepts which they taught and enforced, could have been impostors, or even wished to deceive? None, we think, with proper reflection on the subject, would believe it. If their whole tenor of life demonstrates that they were *good men*—men of integrity and piety—then certainly they would not present a system of religion, furnishing the only way and ground of salvation for the world, unless it was from God. That it was from God they had abundant means of ascertaining. The conclusion then is, that they have presented mankind with a system of truths divine in their origin. This, in our view, is the inevitable conclusion.

2. *The sacred writers taught and propagated the truths of Christianity in view of the most exquisite sufferings.* At this fact we have before hinted, but it seems to require farther examination. We shall

more particularly notice the writers of the New Testament and the first teachers of Christianity: for what is true of them in this respect is equally true of the writers of the Old Testament.

Whoever is at all acquainted with the Christian religion must admit that it would be likely to meet with opposition, it being altogether opposed to the principles and feelings of the human heart. Whoever therefore would engage in propagating this religion, cannot reasonably expect to go unassailed. Now, on the supposition that the first propagators of Christianity were impostors, what could they possibly have had in view in prosecuting their work with nothing but suffering and death before them? For they must have seen that they exposed themselves to these. But it may be said, "that men will face the greatest suffering and danger for emolument and worldly applause." True; but the whole course and conduct of the apostles evince that they neither sought nor desired these things: they renounced all worldly glory, gain, honor, or aggrandizement. Now one of these two conclusions must follow, and be admitted:—Either that the apostles were impostors, and wished to deceive mankind; and that, to carry out this deception, they were willing to suffer all that the ingenuity and malevolence of a wicked world could inflict upon them, when there was no way in which they could be the least gainers by it;—or, that they were men of God, *counting not their own lives near and dear unto them, so that they might finish the work given them of their Master to do.* Who would not embrace the latter conclusion?

But Christ foretold the sufferings which his followers would be called to endure. Both sacred and profane history agree on this point. Their persecutions were all in prospect before them:—

"Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you, and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake."

"When affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended."

"They shall lay hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake."

"The time cometh that he that killeth you will think that he doeth God service."

We are not at liberty to argue from these passages, that Christ actually foretold all these events, and that they did accordingly come to pass—for this would be assuming what we are trying to prove; viz., that the Bible is divine in its origin. But we shall attempt to prove that these predictions did come to pass by other unquestionable evidence; or, at least, that the first propagators of Christianity did suffer almost beyond a parallel for their religion. But let those who profess to believe that the sacred writers were impostors inform us what it is supposed that they could possibly have had in view in penning such predictions as the above?

What the epistles of the apostles declare of the sufferings of the writers and first abettors of the Bible, the writings which remain of their companions and immediate followers expressly confirm.

Clement, who is honorably noticed by St. Paul in his epistle to the Philippians, has left us evidence to this point, in the following words:—"Let us take (says he) the examples of our own age. Through zeal

and envy, the most faithful and righteous pillars of the church have been persecuted even to the most grievous deaths. Let us set before our eyes *the holy apostles*. Peter, by unjust envy, underwent, not one or two, but many sufferings; till, at last, being martyred, he went to the place of glory that was due unto him. For the same cause did Paul, in like manner, receive the reward of his patience. Seven times he was in bonds; he was whipped and stoned; he preached both in the east and in the west, leaving behind him the glorious report of his faith; and so having taught the whole world righteousness, and for that end traveled even unto the utmost bounds of the west, he at last suffered martyrdom by the command of the governors, and departed out of the world and went unto his holy place, being become a most eminent pattern of patience unto all ages. To these holy apostles were joined a very great number of others, who, having through envy undergone, in like manner, many pains and torments, have left a glorious example to us."

Hermas, saluted by St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans, speaks thus:—"Such as have believed and suffered for the name of Christ, and have endured with a ready mind, and have given up their lives with all their hearts."

Polycarp, the disciple of St. John, says, in his only and short epistle:—"I exhort all of you, that ye obey the word of righteousness, and exercise all patience, which ye have set forth before your eyes, not only in the blessed Ignatius, and Lorimus, and Rufus, but in others among yourselves, and in *Paul himself, and the rest of the apostles*; being confident in this, that all these have not run in vain, but in faith and righteousness, and are gone to the place that was due to them from the Lord."

Ignatius, the contemporary of Polycarp, says, "Peter, and those who were with him at Christ's appearance, despised death, and were found to be above it." Other ancient Christian writers might be quoted, but the above are sufficient. Now, whether the first followers of Christ actually suffered as foretold by him, we leave the reader to judge.

That impostors should prosecute their labors in view of such sufferings is incredible; and that they should maintain their allegiance to their Master when called to *experience such sufferings* is still more incredible. Indeed, does not the above evidence of their suffering, under such circumstances, furnish sufficient proof that they were men of God?

3. *The time, style, and manner of the sacred writers, clearly show that they were men of the strictest integrity and sincerity.*

(1.) When were the facts and transactions recorded by the sacred historians first made public? Were they first made known in an after age, when there were none to witness to the truth or falsity of the narrations? No; they were first published among the people who witnessed the events related by the historians; and consequently they could (and doubtless *would*) have easily detected the falsehood in these accounts, if there had been any to detect. But nothing has ever been shown to be false in the writings, either of Moses and the prophets, or of the apostles, by the witnesses of the events which they recorded, or by the keenest opponents of Christianity.

Furthermore, monuments were erected, and institutions were established, in memory of some of the transactions recorded by the sacred writers, which would not have been done had they been an imposition. Now if the transactions were done openly, in view of a host of witnesses; if monuments were erected in remembrance of what had recently taken place; and if institutions were observed from the time in which they were said to be done, then they must be true. For example: it is recorded that Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt; that the king refused to let them go; that God threatened, and actually brought, many judgments on Egypt, on account of which Pharaoh let them go; that the king still hardened his heart, and pursued the Hebrews with the military strength of Egypt, until he and his host were drowned in the Red sea; that Israel passed through the sea safely, and were delivered from the deadly hate of their pursuers; that Israel were forty years in the wilderness, fed on manna, and led by a pillar of cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night; during which time their history is signalized by the miraculous interposition of Divine Providence in their preservation and in the destruction of their enemies.

Now Moses did not pretend that these things were done in secret, but appeals to the outward senses of the people as witnesses of them: "Your eyes have seen all the great acts of the Lord, which he did." Does this look like the conduct of an impostor? Could Moses possibly make the people believe that they had seen all those mighty events and transactions, if they had not seen them? The institution of the *passover* was observed in commemoration of Israel's coming out of Egypt, and was sacredly kept by all from generation to generation. The annual observance of this institution is a standing proof that the event of which it was commemorative is true. Neither could the monuments or ordinances of great celebrity that existed among the Jews and Christians from the very time when they took place, and which exist to the present day in every country where either Jews or Christians are to be found,* receive the credence of the people unless the events of which they are commemorative did actually take place. Is it possible that the monuments of Lexington and of Bunker Hill could obtain credence, if those impressive events which they are designed to commemorate were not true? The fraud would be quickly seen, and the monuments razed to the ground. Nor is it possible to suppose that the monument at Gilgal, commemorative of the passage of Jordan by the Israelites, could be imposed on that generation; and no easier on any succeeding generations, for the same impossibility would exist.

But let us briefly examine some of those events recorded in the New Testament. We will particularly notice the *miracles* which were said to be wrought by Christ. It is said, that he gave sight to those born blind; that he healed the obstinate leprosy; that he made those who wanted a limb, perfect—those who were bowed down, straight—those who shook with palsy, robust; that he nerved the withered arm with strength; that he restored demoniacs to reason;

* Among the Jews there is the ordinance of circumcision, the feast of the *passover*, of tabernacles, and of *pentecost*: among Christians there are the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper, and the sabbath, observed on the first day of the week, in honor of Christ's resurrection from the dead.

and that he "raised the dead to life." Now these miracles were wrought in open day, before a mixed multitude—friends and enemies; and before those, too, who were unwilling to believe any thing miraculous without the strongest evidence. Now, if Christ did not work the miracles which the evangelists positively declare that he did, why did not the enemies of Christianity expose the imposition? They certainly had a good opportunity to detect whatever was false, and there is *no doubt* but they would have done it. But no individual living at the time these miracles were said to be wrought, and who must have known their narration, has ever questioned that they did actually take place, as recorded by the evangelists. Can we possibly need more evidence to prove that the sacred writers have given us a faithful narration of facts?

(2.) The style of the sacred writers was pure, chaste, plain, simple, comprehensive, sublime, and dignified. Though they taught the most grand and sublime truths, doctrines, and precepts ever revealed to man, yet their style is characterized by uncommon plainness, simplicity, and dignity. In all their writings we behold a candor, frankness, gentleness, sweetness, sincerity, boldness, and energy, which clearly mark their desire to communicate the truth. There is nothing which appears like superstitious scrupulosity, fanatical zeal, impassioned, vehement, or violent tones and expressions, or enthusiasm. They could not have been enthusiasts, for there is not the least resemblance to enthusiasm in any thing which they have said, or in the style or manner in which they have said it. Says Horne, "Throughout their writings the utmost impartiality, sobriety, and modesty prevail; and, contrary to the practice of enthusiasts, they record their own mistakes, follies, and faults." Who can believe that such men were enthusiasts, or that they wished to impose on mankind a series of base falsehoods?

(3.) The manner in which the sacred writers communicated their truths is marked with uncommon honesty and impartiality. There is something on the very face of their productions which stamps them as containing a faithful narration of facts. Their honesty is at once discovered in noticing those passages and circumstances which no writer would have been likely to forge; and which no writer would choose to have appear in his book, who had been careful to present the story so as to please the world, or who had considered himself at liberty to carve and mold the particulars of that story according to his own choice, or according to what he supposed would be the effect upon mankind. Says the writer before quoted, "There is in them no preparation of events; there are no artful transitions or connections; no set characters or persons to be introduced; no reflecting on past transactions, or the authors of them; no excuses or apologies for what might probably disturb their readers; no specious artifices; no plausible arguments to set off a doubtful action, and to reconcile it to some other, or to the character of the person who did it. They do not dissemble certain circumstances in the life and sufferings of their Master, which have no tendency to advance his glory in the eyes of the world. They announce the miracles of Jesus Christ with the same dispassionate coolness as if they had been common transactions; nor, *after* the recital, do they break out into exclamations." Such

candor, honesty, and artlessness were never exhibited in the productions of deceivers or impostors.

The most rigid impartiality is observed throughout the sacred writings. In history the sacred writers are impartial and just. In giving the births, labors, sufferings, and deaths of many individuals named in the sacred records, the same impartiality is discovered. They do not eulogize their particular favorites; while others, who do not fall in with their view of things, meet with unsparing reprehension. They labor to give a true and faithful picture of the characters they represent, without any effort or design to exaggerate or detract. The apostles, although they followed the most extraordinary leader ever known in the world, have written the history of his life without a single panegyric! In the history of distinguished characters, their failings and improprieties are equally noticed with their virtues and good deeds. The writers, instead of speaking of their own excellence, have candidly and faithfully recorded their own prejudices, weaknesses, want of faith, foibles, and mistakes. Does this look like the work of fanatics, enthusiasts, or impostors? Are the writings of such marked with strict impartiality? and were they ever known to pass by what they considered their virtues, and record their own follies and faults? Let the reader judge, and then say if we have not sufficient evidence here that the sacred writers were what they professed to be.

4. *The sacred writers were inspired men*; and, if inspired, they were good men. By *inspired*, we mean, *directed by the Holy Ghost*. "But holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." It is not presumed that *all* the words and phrases used by the sacred writers were directed by God, though this was probably the case in *some* instances—for St. Paul declares that they "spake the things which were given them of God in the words which the Holy Ghost teacheth;" but simply, that God gave the *whole matter*, leaving the writers, as a general thing, to use their *own language*; and hence the great variety of style and different mode of expression. That the sacred writers were inspired is demonstrated,

(1.) *From the harmony and agreement apparent throughout their writings*. That the Bible was written at different times, in different places, and by different men, must be admitted by all who credit the statements of profane history. On this point sacred and profane history agree. From Moses to Isaiah were 700 years; from Isaiah to Malachi, 300; from Malachi to John, whose writings close the book, 400. Hence from Moses to the death of John were 1,500 years. Through this whole period there is no jar, but perfect *harmony and agreement* through all their writings, leading the mind to the same great objects and results. Does this bear the appearance of *forgery*? "Wicked men could not if they would, and would not if they could, write such a book. It prophesies *evil* against them. Good men (as we have already shown) would not, if they could, impose upon the world a book of fables and falsehoods for divine revelation." But, if they were capable of forging such a collection of lies as the Bible is said to be by infidels, we can see no motive which could possibly influence them to do it. Dryden is very explicit on this point:—

"Whence but from Heaven could men, unskill'd in arts,
 In different nations born, in different parts,
 Weave such agreeing truths? Or, how or why
 Should all conspire to cheat us with a lie?
 Unask'd their pains, ungrateful their advice,
 Starving their gain, and martyrdom their prize."

In the language of another, we may inquire, "How can it be accounted for, that, during the long period of fifteen hundred years, which the Bible was in writing by princes, priests, shepherds, and fishermen, (and without comparing notes,) and who wrote laws, history, prophecy, odes, devotional exercises, proverbs, parables, doctrines, and controversy, and yet all exactly *coincide* in the exhibition they give us of the perfections, works, truths, and will of God; of the nature, situation, and obligations of man; of sin and of salvation; of this world and the next; and, in short, in all things connected with our duty, interest, and comfort; and yet no disagreement, but *harmony* among them all?" Can this agreement be accounted for on any other ground, except that the writers were divinely inspired? We consider it impossible." Says another writer, "*Apparent* inconsistencies may indeed perplex the superficial reader, but they will all vanish after a more accurate investigation. The exact coincidence that is perceived among those by whom the Bible was written, by the diligent student, is most astonishing, and cannot be accounted for on any *mere rational* principles without admitting that they wrote by divine inspiration." Let those who embrace the opposite opinion remember the unsupported assertions, abusive epithets, illiberal sarcasms, &c., which have been brought forward, instead of arguments, to support their theory, by Voltaire, Bolingbroke, Thomas Paine, and nearly all infidel writers. If they had arguments, they would unquestionably have adduced them. We consider, therefore, their ground untenable. The only right conclusion, then, is, in view of what has been said respecting the perfect harmony observable throughout the sacred writings, that they must have been dictated and directed by the "Holy Ghost." If, then, they were written by inspiration, the writers must have been *inspired*.

(2.) *By the fulfilment of numerous prophecies recorded by them.* That God can reveal future things to man, no one will question who believes in the existence of God. That he *has* revealed future things thus, we shall attempt to show.

All will admit, that there are many professed predictions of future events recorded in the Scriptures. But are those predictions true? Were they recorded at the time they are said to have been recorded? and have they been fulfilled as recorded? Some of them have been thus fulfilled, while others undoubtedly yet remain to be fulfilled. We shall only now notice some of those which have, we believe, been accurately fulfilled.

Perhaps it will be unnecessary to tax the attention of the reader with the prophecies respecting the condition and the destruction of Nineveh, Babylon, Tyre, &c. That these prophecies were fulfilled, the celebrated Greek and Roman historians, Xenophon, Strabo, Herodotus, Pliny and others bear ample testimony.

The prophecy of *Jacob concerning Judah* will first claim our particular attention. Gen. xlix, 10: "The sceptre *shall not* depart from

Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come, and unto him shall the gathering of the people be." Judah, according to this prophecy, is to retain its *authority*, its rulers, judges, elders, &c., until the coming of the Messiah. But was this the case? In 1 Kings, chap. xvii, we read that the king of Assyria subjected the *ten tribes* to himself. This subjugation took place about nine hundred years after this prophecy was uttered. But though the ten tribes were now no longer a distinct people, but scattered among other nations, yet the *tribe of Judah* remained distinct; and during the seventy years' captivity in Babylon no intermarriages were allowed with other nations, and they were permitted to choose their own elders, *governors, judges, &c.*; plant their own vineyards and gardens, build houses, &c., (Jer. xxix;) and this they did as a distinct people, having rule, until Shiloh appeared. Hence the truth of that saying of the Jews, "We be Abraham's seed, and were *never in bondage* to any man." Suetonius and Tacitus confirm the fulfilment of the prediction. The conclusion is, therefore, that Jacob was inspired to prophesy as he did, for he could not have foretold the events which were fulfilled in this prophecy without divine inspiration.

The sceptre departed from Judah, and their power was taken away, soon after the coming of the *true Shiloh*, and the nation was dispersed.

The twenty-eighth chapter of Deuteronomy contains many striking predictions *respecting the Jews*, the besieging of their cities, grievous famines, &c.; that they should be few in number, and scattered among all nations. The length of the chapter forbids our quoting it entire. A few particulars must therefore suffice.

First. Moses foretold in the 52d verse that their cities would be besieged and taken. This prophecy was fulfilled by Shishak, king of Egypt, (2 Chron. xii, 2,) by Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, (2 Kings xvii, 2, &c.,) by Nebuchadnezzar, Antiochus Epiphanes, and finally by Titus.

Secondly. Grievous famines during those sieges were foretold, and also that their distress would be so great that they would eat the fruit of their own bodies; see ver. 53, &c. This was accurately fulfilled when Samaria was besieged, when Jerusalem was besieged before the Babylonish captivity, and finally during the siege of Jerusalem by the Romans. Particularly in the last instance, authentic history informs us that the distress was beyond expression. Josephus' Wars of the Jews, book vii, chap. 2, gives us a striking instance, in dreadful detail, of a woman named *Mary*, who, in the extremity of the famine, during the siege, killed her sucking child, roasted, and had eaten part of it, when discovered by the soldiers! See this predicted Jer. xix, 9.

Again: It was foretold that they should be few in number. This is now literally true. Ninety-nine thousand were taken *prisoners*, and more than *twelve hundred thousand* were put to death by Vespasian and Titus. Vast multitudes died by *famine*: they killed each other; and thousands were sold; and those for whom purchasers could not be found (Moses had foretold that *no man would buy them*, ver. 68) were transported into Egypt, where many perished by shipwreck, famine, &c. See an account of the siege of Jerusalem by Titus in Josephus' *Antiq.*, book xii, chap. 1, 2; and also Newton's *Dissertations on the Prophecies*.

Moreover, it was also foretold that they should be *scattered among all people*. This was also literally fulfilled. They are now scattered over every nation under heaven. For eighteen hundred years they have suffered almost all sorts of plagues, indignities, and privations. They are to this day a standing, indubitable proof of the truth of the predictions concerning them.

The prophecies of this chapter were delivered more than three thousand years since; yet the condition of the Jews is as minutely described from that time to this as if the writer had been a spectator of every scene through the whole series of events. Could Moses have uttered prophecies which have been thus fully and circumstantially fulfilled, unless he had been *inspired*? Impossible!

The reader's attention is now directed to a few predictions respecting the Messiah, and their complete fulfilment in *Jesus Christ*.

Take, first, the prophecy respecting the *place where the Messiah was to be born*. Micah v, 2: "Thou, *Bethlehem Ephratah*, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel."

Fulfilment. Luke ii, 4, 5: "All went to be taxed, (or 'enrolled,) every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, with Mary his espoused wife, unto *Bethlehem*; and while they were there *she brought forth her first-born son*." Compare also Luke ii, 10, 11, 16, and Matt. ii, 1, 4-6, 8, 11; John vii, 42.

Consider, secondly, *his public entry into Jerusalem*. Zech. ix, 9: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, even upon a colt, the foal of an ass."

Fulfilment. Matt. xxi, 7-10: "The disciples brought the ass and the colt, and put on them their clothes, and set him thereon; and great multitudes spread their garments," &c., &c. Matt. xxi, 4, 5: "*All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, saying, Tell ye the daughter of Zion, Behold thy King cometh,*" &c., &c.

Again, thirdly, *the circumstances of his death*. Psal. lxix, 21: "They gave me also gall for my meat, and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink." Psal. xxii, 18: "They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture."

Fulfilment. Matt. xxvi, 48, &c.: "And they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to his mouth." John xix, 23, 24: "And the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also his coat: now the coat was without seam; they said, therefore, Let us not rend it, but cast lots whose it shall be."

Again; Psal. xxxiv, 20: "He keepeth all his bones, not one of them is broken." Zech. xii, 10: "And they shall look upon me whom they have *pierced*."

Fulfilment. John xix, 32, 34: "Then came the soldiers and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him; but when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs. But one of the soldiers, with a spear, pierced his side, and forthwith there came out blood and water."

The above are sufficient to show the accuracy of the fulfilment of

those predictions respecting Christ—predictions made hundreds of years before the Messiah appeared in the flesh. Therefore we will not notice the numerous other prophecies running through all the prophets respecting this glorious personage. Suffice it to say, that the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, which was written more than seven hundred years before Christ, seems almost like a *complete history* of his character, sufferings, and death. On this account, it is said that the Jews omit that chapter in their reading, teaching, and even in the transcriptions of their sacred books. They are evidently afraid of the truth.

Now, we candidly ask, Is it possible for persons to foretell that a Messiah should come—the precise time of his coming—the dignity of his character—the place where he was born—his birth and manner of life—his sufferings and death—his resurrection and ascension, hundreds of years before these events took place, without being inspired by Him “who seeth the end from the beginning?” Indeed, the inevitable conclusion is, that, if the sacred writers could utter predictions respecting different events, which have been fulfilled in all their minuteness, centuries after the predictions were made, that they were inspired men, “moved by the Holy Ghost.” “Prophecy came not in old time by the will of man,” &c. If then the sacred writers were inspired, they must have recorded facts and transactions as they were directed by God; hence what they wrote while inspired must be *divine*.

Prophecies respecting other subjects might be noticed were it necessary; but, if the above be not sufficient for our purpose, we shall fail in amplifying further. Reader, may the God of all grace lead thee to a knowledge of the truth on this subject—and mayest thou find that the blessed Bible is a sure and unerring directory to present and eternal blessedness!

Our second position is, that the divine origin of the Scriptures is demonstrated from their morality. That the sacred writers have presented to mankind an incomparable system of morality, no one can deny: a system reasonable, consistent, comprehensive, and simple; harmonizing in all its parts, and having the most direct tendency to make men wise, holy, and happy in themselves, and useful to mankind. It universally prohibits all sinful practices, such as adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, and revellings; while it exhibits, and holds out to the reception of every individual, love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance. It teaches men to be meek, yielding, complying, forgiving; not only prompt to act, but willing to suffer; silent and patient under calumny and insult, seeking reconciliation where others would demand satisfaction. “Resist not evil, but whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also; and if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also; and whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain; love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you.” “This truly,” as Dr. Paley justly observes, “is not *common-place morality*. It is based on the golden rule, Whatsoever ye would that others should

do to you, do ye even so to them, for this is the law and the prophets." How simple, yet how grand and sublime!

However little attention some bearing the Christian name may have paid to these great and Christian principles—and this failure, by the way, argues nothing against the truth of Christianity—yet there are many who have adhered to them with a tenacity truly commendable. "Their praise is in all the churches;" and of many of them, it may be said, "Their record is on high."

Clement of Rome says, in speaking of the early Christians;—"These things, (the duties of religion,) they who have their conversation toward God, not to be repented of, both have done, and will *always be ready to do.*"

Polycarp speaks of them as "not rendering evil for evil, railing for railing, striking for striking, cursing for cursing, &c. ; but as walking by the same rule, and minding the same things." Those who lived otherwise, he rebuked.

Ignatius, in exhorting them under their persecutions, says:—"Be ye mild at their anger, humble at their boastings, to their blasphemies return your prayers, to their error your firmness in the faith; when they are cruel, be ye gentle; not endeavoring to imitate their ways: let us be their brethren in all kindness and moderation; but let us be the followers of the Lord—for who was ever more unjustly used, more destitute, more despised?" Noble exhortation! So much for the early Christians. Were it necessary, copious examples to the point might be adduced of Christians in modern times.

But let us inquire, In what productions of uninspired men do you find a morality which will compare with that of the Bible? Where will you find unbelievers who have set themselves up as teachers of mankind, whose lives will compare in moral rectitude with those of the sacred writers, or even of true Christians of all ages? Moral impurities run through all the productions of philosophers, heathens, skeptics of ancient times, as well as through those of infidels in modern times. Let us briefly examine the writings of some of the heathen philosophers and moralists:—

Zeno the stoic, and Diogenes the cynic, taught the foulest impurities. Socrates, the best of heathen philosophers, and Seneca, celebrated for his morals, taught that *adultery and suicide are lawful*. Solon gave license to dissoluteness, and Lycurgus tolerated theft as a part of education. Plato recommended a community of women, and taught that *lying was lawful*; while Aristotle maintained the right of making war upon barbarians. The elder Cato taught the practice of inflicting cruelties upon slaves; the younger disregarded the obligations and duties of the marriage state. Epicurus taught that pleasure was the chief good to be sought; while the writings of Xenophon, Cicero, and Epictetus are marked with loose and deleterious principles.

The writings of modern infidels are no better. Voltaire taught, that if men *lived up* to their religious systems, whatever they were, they were *virtuous*. Hobbes advocated the doctrine, that *every man had a right to all things, and might lawfully get them, if he could*. Helvetius and Rousseau inculcated the practice of "the unlimited gratification of the sensual appetites." Hume and Bolingbroke in-

sisted on the sentiments, that polygamy is a part of the law of nature, and that adultery and suicide are *consistent* and *lawful*. Unlimited sensuality and the most degrading practices, as cardinal points to be observed, run through the writings of Volney, Diderot, D'Alembert, Herbert, Shaftesbury, Morgan, Byron, Gibbon, and Paine.

With the above we may notice the writings of Mohammed. While many good things are found in them, (and these, by the way, are drawn from the Christian Scriptures,) yet they contain the most unlimited sensual indulgences.

But it may be said, "that the writings of many individuals above named contain good moral precepts." True; but they are indebted to the Bible for them. The ancient heathen philosophers probably received some traditional notices of revelation, while modern infidels have had an opportunity of examining the entire Scriptures. That many of the good things they have said were taken from the Scriptures, their own testimony confirms.

Our limits will not permit us to notice other systems of ancient and modern moralists in detail. Suffice it to say, that most of them are exceedingly defective. While they contain many good moral precepts, they sensualize the mind, pervert the taste, and lead men to neglect the great object of their being.

Having examined the various productions of men for a pure system of morality in vain, we are again led to observe that the Bible contains *such a system*, and that it bears irrefragable proof of its divine origin. *Infidels* themselves, and even the most talented of them, while they must have seen the corrupting influence of their own boasted morality, have confessed that the sensibilities and passions of human nature have been greatly cultivated and improved, and society greatly meliorated, by the influence of the Bible. Hume, in his History of England, says, "The *Puritans* (they took the Bible for their guide) had the *purest* morality; and the English nation were indebted to them for the first spark of *liberty* that was ever struck out in that kingdom." Lord Bolingbroke declares, that "the gospel is in all cases one continued lesson of the *strictest morality* and *justice*." *Rousseau* says, "The majesty of the Scriptures strikes me with admiration, as the purity of the gospel hath its influence on my heart. Peruse the works of our philosophers, with all their pomp of diction; how mean, how contemptible are they, compared with the Scriptures!" Thomas Paine confessed that Jesus Christ was "a virtuous and an amiable man. The *morality* that he preached and practised was of the most benevolent kind." These confessions are remarkable, seeing they come from the most determined opposers of Christianity. They clearly show that the understanding will sometimes get the better of the depraved affections, and will then speak out the truth. "Our rock is not their rock, even our enemies themselves being judges." If the Bible, then, contains the best system of morality ever presented to mankind—and that it does we think has been made to appear, both from friends and enemies—both in its doctrines and practical results, we are inevitably led to the conclusion, that it is divine in its origin. This leads us,

3. In the third place, to show that the Bible is divine in its origin, from the influence which it has had universally upon the hearts and

lives of men. This we have partially seen while examining the morality of the Bible; but as this point is of considerable importance in settling the subject satisfactorily now under consideration, further examination seems to be necessary. That the effects produced by the Bible on the hearts and lives of men, not only in the apostolical, but through subsequent ages, has been powerful, benign, and salutary, the history of the church abundantly attests. The Bible has destroyed the ferocious disposition, subdued the obdurate will, and restrained the most violent passions of men. It has disclosed to man his unbelief, rebellion, impiety, impenitence, ungratefulness, hatred of God, rejection of Christ, &c., all of which it has led him voluntarily to renounce; and also it has led him to cherish the amiable spirit of submission, repentance, confidence, hope, gratitude, and love. It has taught man how he might obtain the image of his Maker here, and shine with moral and eternal beauty in the kingdom of God.

The influence of the religion of the Bible on the *lives* of men has been astonishing and glorious. It has removed from men, whenever it has been embraced, the most degrading superstitions; the impure, brutal, and sanguinary worship, practised in regions of idolatry, together with the horrors of war, so far as its influence has extended, and many other enormous crimes of a similar nature. It has provided support for the poor and suffering, secured the rights of strangers, erected hospitals for the sick, formed with great expense a rich variety of institutions for the preservation and education of orphans, the instruction of poor children, the suppression of vice, the amendment of the vicious, and the consolation of the afflicted. It has made better rulers and better subjects, better husbands and better wives, better parents and better children, better neighbors and better friends. Have infidelity and philosophy, with all their boastings, ever done as much toward making men happy, useful, and blessed? The answer must be returned in the negative.

But it is sometimes insultingly asked, "Who are those who believe in the Bible? Are they not the illiterate, silly, weak-minded," &c. We would, in turn, ask, Who are those who propound such inquiries? Why, they are such men as Thomas Paine, Voltaire, Carlisle, Shaftesbury, and a few other French and English infidels, with Abner Kneeland, and a few others of the same school. But what if such men, with all their illiterateness, immorality, insolence, wit, sarcasm, sophisms, ridicule, and slander, have rejected the Bible, and set at nought the spirit and principles of Christianity, if we can number among the believers in Christianity the wise, the good, the talented, the learned, men of distinguished sense, and the first characters who have adorned the world, in every department of life? But, let us now inquire, Who are those who are called "silly, weak-minded," &c.? Why, they are such divines and philanthropists as Butler, Barrow, Berkley, Clarkson, Cudworth, Watts, Clark, Sherlock, Doddridge, Lardner, Pearson, Taylor, Usher, Wesley, A. Clarke, Watson, Wilberforce, Howard, Dwight, Bacon, Jones, and a thousand others. Such poets as Spencer, Waller, Cowley, Prior, Thompson, Gray, Young, Milton, Cowper, and many others. Such statesmen as Hyde, Somers, Pulteney, Cullen, King, Barrington, Littleton, Washington, &c. Such moralists as Steele, Addison, Hawksworth, Johnson, &c. Such physicians as Arbuthnot, Cheyne,

Browne, Boerhaave, Pringle, Hartley, Haller, Mead, Fothergill, Good, and a host of others. Such lawyers and judges as Hale, Melmoth, Hailes, Forbes, Pratt, Blackstone, Jones, Marshall, &c. All the above received the Bible as the word of God. Many of them had "investigated the principles of the gospel to the bottom; and they were not only satisfied with the justice of its claims, but gloried in it as the most benevolent and godlike scheme; it was their study in life, their solace in death." To the above we may add the names of thousands of others among the good and pious of every age; men of distinguished abilities, and profound erudition; men who have erected monuments of their zeal and benevolence, immortal as the soul, and lasting as eternity itself. But the above will suffice until philosophy and infidelity can bring forward their advocates and champions as more worthy our regard, for their judgment, sense, abilities, piety, learning, and benevolence. Until this can be done, we hope to hear no more about the advocates of the Bible being "silly, weak-minded," &c. It is true, we are not to argue the divinity of the Bible exclusively from the fact, that so many distinguished individuals—individuals who shone the brightest in literature, morals, and religion—have been believers in Christianity; but still this fact clearly shows the happy and benign influence the Bible has had upon the hearts and lives of men. And we are justly led to the conclusion, that if the Bible has had such a powerful and beneficial influence on men who have examined its claims, and weighed the evidence of its truth, that it must be divine. No other production *has* produced, or *could* produce, unless it be divine, such an effect.

But, some are ready to inquire, "If such great and distinguished men have been believers in Christianity, why have not all men embraced the Bible as a divine revelation?" We answer, first, it "prophesies evil against them." Men do not like to be told of their sins and crimes with the singular plainness of the Bible. Secondly, The Bible has not been thoroughly and properly examined by all. It is not to be expected that it would be embraced as divine until it is examined. How few make the Bible a book of *study*—or, indeed, read it with that attention which they bestow on other productions! Many infidels themselves have been exceedingly ignorant of the Scriptures. Sir Isaac Newton once said to Dr. Halley, when uttering some hard things against Christianity, "Dr. Halley, I am always glad to hear you when you speak about astronomy, or other parts of the mathematics, because that is a subject you have studied and well understand; but you should not talk of Christianity, for you have not studied it;—I have, and I am certain you know nothing of the matter." David Hume confessed, that he "had never read the New Testament with attention." What men to put down Christianity! Laboring to destroy that they do not understand! Indeed, nearly all infidel writers have evinced their downright ignorance of the Bible while writing against it. Who that has read Paine's *Age of Reason* can believe that the writer was thoroughly acquainted with the Bible? It has so happened, that the warmest opponents to Christianity have been the least acquainted with it—and that its warmest advocates have been the most acquainted with it. Only let the Bible be universally read, candidly, seriously, prayerfully, and thoroughly examined,

and infidelity dies. It cannot bear the scorching light of sacred truth.

But, we may here inquire, what have philosophy and infidelity done for the salvation of the world? What philosophy has done, we may see from the testimony of its warmest adherents. Cicero, who was himself one of the greatest and most learned of the heathen philosophers, declares, in an unqualified manner, that they, so far as he knew, had never, even in a single instance, reformed either themselves or their disciples. Socrates, who labored hard to reform the youth of Athens, and succeeded to some extent, said, that "he despaired of a thorough reformation till God should reveal a better system, and that system come clothed with the highest authority." Porphyry, a bitter enemy to the Bible, declared that "some universal system was wanting of delivering men's souls, which philosophy had never found out." Many other philosophers have confessed the same truth. Those who are extensively acquainted with modern infidels, perfectly know that their principles have been equally unproductive of any proofs of reformation of character.

If then the Bible has produced that effect on the hearts and lives of men, which no other production has done—if it has thoroughly reformed men, and made them holy, happy, and useful, while all the systems of men have ceased to produce this effect, but the contrary—we must admit its divine origin.

4. *The wonderful establishment and propagation of the religion of the Bible evinces its divine origin.* We will commence with the establishment and propagation of Christianity by Jesus Christ. All the glory of former dispensations was eclipsed in the advent, life, labors, sufferings, and resurrection of the Son of God. Christianity was now presented to mankind in quite a new form, disconnected from those types and symbols by which it was shadowed forth to the world in past ages. It was presented, too, at a time when, if there had been any thing spurious in it, it might easily, and unquestionably would, have been detected. It was an age of philosophy, of inquiry, of research, of criticism, and of erudition. Rhetoric, eloquence, poetry, and some of the other branches of science, were studied with a success which has hardly been surpassed at any subsequent age. Surely this was a time unfavorable for the introduction of a false religion. But Christianity had nothing to fear. It did not elude the light of erudition. It was submitted to the investigation of philosophers, sages, lawyers, judges, priests, princes, poets, &c. But, with all their scrutiny and discrimination, they were not able to point out a single defect. The more it was examined the more clearly its divinity appeared. And notwithstanding every scheme and machination that could be devised, and all the influence, malice, envy, malevolence, power, and ambition of the great, the wise, and distinguished, that could possibly be exercised, were put forth against it, yet it unprecedently gained adherents, and its Author, it is said, was "believed on in the world." Indeed, is not the establishment of the Christian religion under such circumstances truly wonderful? Would it not have been immediately put down, and its abettors exterminated, had it not been divine? Wicked men and infidels have done all they *could* to

destroy it; but it still lives—lives to spread its hallowing and saving influence over the entire habitable globe. True:

“When he first the work begun,
Small and feeble was his day;
Now the word doth swiftly run,
Now it wins its widening way.
More and more it spreads and grows,
Ever mighty to prevail,
Sin's stronghold it now o'erthrows,
Shakes the trembling gates of hell.”

Its promulgators were “in peril by sea and land,” and among the heathen, as well as among “false brethren;” but thousands embraced it, and held it dearer than life itself. Only ten days had elapsed after Christ's ascension before “about three thousand souls” embraced Christianity. Soon after that we are informed in the fourth chapter of the Acts that the number professing faith in Christ was “about five thousand.” The Christian religion continued to spread throughout “all Asia;” and besides, converts were soon multiplied at Rome, Alexandria, Athens, Cyprus, Cyrene, Macedonia, Philippi, &c., and their number is intimated by the expressions, “a great number,” “great multitude,” “much people,” &c. About two hundred years after Christ, Christianity became the religion of the *Roman empire*. This was effected by the conversion of Constantine, a Roman emperor. From Constantine to the present time the religion of the Bible has been gaining ground. In every age it has had its converts and advocates, who, amid calumny, reproach, and persecution of every possible description, have “fearlessly advocated its unpopular cause, and, in defiance of earth and hell, have proclaimed it abroad from city to city, and from one country to another, and established it among the different nations of the world. Hume, that arch infidel, predicted the downfall of Christianity in the nineteenth century. Voltaire as triumphantly asserted, that, although it took twelve men to plant Christianity, his single arm should root it out. And Paine boasted, (but it was before he put off the harness,) that he had cut down every tree in paradise.”

But have the predictions and sayings of infidels proved true? The very press that scattered Voltaire's pernicious publications has recently been employed by the Paris Bible Society; and also in the very chamber in which Hume uttered his evil prophecy, the first committee assembled to form the Edinburgh Bible Society. By means of missionary and Bible societies the word of the Lord goes forth from conquering to conquer. Pagan idolatry, and the rites and superstitions of heathenism are disappearing before its conquering and resuscitating influence. What is Christianity doing for Europe? The man of sin ere this has begun to tremble. Romanism, with all its infallibility, is “nodding to its fall.” Asia feels its benign influence. The pagan idols of India are about to be left destitute of worshippers. The way is opening for the salvation of benighted Africa. If the predictions of the Bible be true, Ethiopia must soon “stretch out her hands unto God.” America feels its hallowed and redeeming power. Already a fire has been kindled which will melt the chains of her enslaved millions. The degraded tribes beyond the Rocky Mountains rejoice at

its approach, while Buenos Ayres, and other portions of the extreme south, are sending out the Macedonian cry, "Come to our help!" The "islands of the sea are waiting for his law." The "stone cut out of the mountain without hands," is rolling and enlarging, and is destined to fill the whole earth.

Now, we are led to inquire, Is not Christianity from above? Is not its author God, blessed for ever? Who can doubt it? Let infidelity blush and retire into perpetual silence, while it beholds its progress and triumph! All reason exclaims, it must be from Heaven! The Bible, then, must be divine.

In conclusion. *That the Bible should receive our increasing attachment, we argue from the fact, that it furnishes the only method of salvation to a lost and ruined world.* How discordant and irreconcilable have been the notions and opinions of sages, philosophers, poets, and statesmen, of all ages, respecting man's highest interests! Human reason, with all its boasted infallibility, was insufficient to lead them right respecting one fundamental truth. In proof of this, we need but refer to the endless differences and inconsistencies which prevailed among the most renowned ancient philosophers, *some* of whom taught the most pernicious doctrines; while the influence of *all* was very inconsiderable both in rectifying the sentiments and reforming the lives of mankind. Also the speculations of modern deists concerning religion are so glaringly contradictory, and their ethical precepts so utterly subversive of every principle of morality, as to demonstrate the necessity of a revelation from Heaven, in order to lead mankind to the knowledge of God and of their duty to each other. Indeed, the bewildering speculations of unassisted reason of all ages only evinces the absolute necessity of a divine revelation in guiding man through the dark labyrinth of this unfriendly world to the rest prepared for him in heaven. What man would be in his present condition, with nothing but human reason, unassisted by revelation, for his guide, will strikingly appear, when we consider,

1. That it could neither trace the existence nor perfections of God. It could not ascertain whether there were one God or many. Socrates taught the worship of a plurality of gods. Plutarch says, "that the knowledge of the gods can be had only from them." The most vague and confused notions of God and his attributes were entertained by all the ancient heathen philosophers. This has also been the case with all in modern times who have discarded the idea of a divine revelation. Well may we exclaim, in view of the fruitless efforts of reason in ascertaining the being and perfections of God, "Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty to perfection?" "The world by wisdom knew not God." Of the heathen world who have never seen the dawn of revelation, it may be said, "they are without God and without hope," that "there is none that understandeth, that seeketh after God." Reason afforded them but an uncertain light. But the Bible furnishes all necessary information respecting the existence and perfections of the "only living and true God."

2. As unassisted reason could not find out the being and perfections of God, so it could not tell us what the will of God is. "Plato wished for a prophet to reveal the will of God to us, without which we cannot know it." Where the Bible has not been received as a divine revela-

tion, men have invariably been destitute of a knowledge of the will of God. How dreadful must be the want of such knowledge!

3. It could not ascertain how guilty man might be saved. This of all things is the most important. Says Richard Watson:—"Without this book, where should we go to find a single word to support the hope that God would forgive the sins of his creatures? Certain it is, that nature, so called, indicates nothing of this in any of her works. Nor is it indicated by that course of human events which passes before us. If God be favorable to the guilty, he must either wave his just rights altogether, or find some means to satisfy them, without the actual punishment of the offender. In either case it is a matter to be determined by himself, and only to be known by us when he is pleased to reveal it. We should, therefore, untaught by this sacred volume, be so unacquainted with the things of God, as to be ignorant of what he would do with the guilty." How valuable, then, must be the Bible in directing us in a matter of such paramount importance! Think, for a moment, what would be the condition of men could they find no satisfactory answer to the question, "What must I do to be saved?" Reason furnishes no such answer.

4. Unassisted reason would leave man in doubt respecting his future destiny. Of this truth antiquity furnishes ample proof. Though most of the heathen philosophers professed to believe in the immortality of the soul, yet their ideas on the subject were very indefinite and vague, and many of them very discordant. Bishop Warburton has proved, that the four renowned schools among the Greeks, the Pythagoric, the Platonic, the Peripatetic, and the Stoic, believed and taught that the *soul was a part of God*, and would ultimately be united to him by *refusion*, as a drop of water to the ocean. It is said, that they taught the doctrine of future reward and punishment as a means of securing the obedience of the populace to the laws. Many of the ancient philosophers held to the transmigration of souls. Cicero informs us, that some "said that the soul was the heart, others the blood, others the brain, others the breath, others fire, others said it was nothing but an empty name," &c. What ignorance and uncertainty must have enveloped the entire heathen world respecting man's future being! It is true, they seemed to have some ideas of great Scriptural truths; but for these they were indebted to revelation, not to reason. What must have been our views of the future, with nothing but erring reason for our guide? But, thank God, "life and immortality are brought to light in the gospel." Were it necessary, other points might be noticed on which reason is insufficient to guide us. Indeed, nothing that is essential to salvation can be clearly taught by its unassisted and uncertain light.

How invaluable, then, must be the Bible. Respecting the being and attributes of God—his will concerning us—how the guilty might be saved—and a correct knowledge of our future destiny, it is clear and perspicuous. In all matters essential to our present and eternal salvation it is a "light to our feet, a lamp to our path." But for this blessed book we should now entertain the same views which are spread over the heathen world, and might this day be prostrating ourselves before stocks and stones, and looking up to some being of but yesterday as an object of worship! Look, for a moment, at the nature of

those religious systems invented by man without the Bible. How childish, how senseless, how self-contradictory, have been the opinions, how infatuated, how sottish the precepts, by which they have professedly regulated the moral conduct of men ; how debased, how full of turpitude, how fraught with frenzy, the religious services by which they have labored to propitiate their gods ! The Bible unfolds a better system. It teaches man the true object of worship, how his sins may be forgiven, and how to obtain a glorious immortality. It is the window through which the Christian beholds his long-sought rest. It is man's unerring guide, his only hope. With all the light of reason every thing would be dark and gloomy. The Bible sheds a lustre on our "pathway to the tomb," and points to our home in glory. With the Bible in our hands, who can deprive us of our treasure above ? "O how love I thy law !" "May it be my meditation day and night !" Amen.

Manchester, Conn., April, 1839.

For the Methodist Magazine and Quarterly Review.

BAPTISM.

A Sermon on Acts x, 47, delivered before the Junior Preachers' Society of the New-England Conference, by REV. J. PORTER.

"Can any man forbid water that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we ?"

THIS text forms a part of a conversation which took place between Peter and his associates, in the house of Cornelius, the centurion. At the command of God, which Peter received in a vision, he came to this house ; and, after hearing the circumstances which led to his being sent for, he preached unto Cornelius and others Jesus of Nazareth. And while he yet spake, the Holy Ghost fell on them that heard the word, though Gentiles, and they spake with tongues, and magnified God. At this, those of the circumcision were much astonished, not because they were ignorant of the Holy Ghost, or his operations ; but because he had fallen on the Gentiles, whom they supposed to be precluded from all the blessings of the new, as well as those of the old covenant. Peter, discovering this, and knowing the inveteracy of their prejudices against the Gentiles, addressed them in the language of the text, "Can any man forbid water that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we ?" As much as if he had said, Have you any objection to their receiving the sign, baptism, and being added to the Christian church, now they have received the thing signified, the Holy Ghost ? The water being furnished in token of their assent, they were baptized as the gospel directs.

With this view of the text, I have made choice of it as an appropriate foundation for my discourse. And here let it be premised, that at this age of the Christian church, almost every period of which has been characterized by learned and critical discussion on this subject, it can hardly be expected that much new and interesting can be said upon it, especially by a junior in the clerical office. This, it is pre-

sumed, was not anticipated by the committee, at whose request this discourse has been prepared, much less by your speaker. As, however, the beauty, force, and importance of truth, consist, not in its novelty, or in the manner of its presentation, but rather in its own intrinsic character, a discourse on this subject may not be entirely useless. The least it can do is to stir our minds to remember the relation this doctrine holds in the Christian system, and the principles and arguments by which its practical observance is regulated and enforced. If, however, any yet remain in the mists of error and superstition, we may hope, I trust, without presumption, that it will lead them to, at least, a more careful and unprejudiced examination. And, as in pursuing the subject I shall naturally be led to vindicate those views which we have denominationally adopted, it is exceedingly desirable that it may serve to demolish the walls of partition between us and our opponents, and educe the concession, if no more, that we may be right.

But, leaving all results to Him whose blessing we have supplicated, I shall proceed to show—

I. *The nature of water baptism.*

II. *That no particular mode is specified in the gospel. And,*

III. *That three modes are presumptive.*

I. *I am to show the nature of baptism.* Error on this point necessarily leads to error in regard to the mode. As, for illustration, if we suppose the nature of baptism to consist chiefly in the amount of water used, we shall naturally incline to that mode which requires the amount supposed to be requisite. Or, if we consider it, as many do, a representation and memorial of the death and resurrection of Christ, we shall of course adopt immersion as more expressive of these events than any other mode practised. And thus it is in regard to every other supposable case, as error is unalterably and for ever the tendency of error. It is therefore highly essential, in seeking the mode in which baptism ought to be administered, that we have correct views of its nature.

To proceed, then, I observe,

1. *Baptism consists not in the amount of water used, or the manner of its application.* It is a common remark among Baptists, that all Christians agree in pronouncing immersion, baptism. But this is not correct. Immersion is not baptism, neither do the *Baptists* so understand it. I repeat it, immersion is not baptism. If it were, then all who have been immersed are baptized persons, which is not true. That the antediluvians, and Pharaoh and his hosts, were immersed, all concede: but were they baptized? All males, who have come to years of maturity, with scarcely an exception, have been immersed; and yet, to say they have been baptized in the gospel sense is absurd.

The same may be said of sprinkling and pouring. Simply considered, they are no more baptism than immersion.

2. *Christian baptism is a religious application of water, by a professed minister of Christ, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.* Thus Christ, when he commissioned his apostles for their great work, said, "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." And the Apostle Paul seems to have been

impressed with this sentiment, when he said to the dissentious Corinthians, "Were ye baptized in the name of *Paul*? I thank God that I baptized none of you, lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name." Baptism, then, consists not in *much water* or *little*; but in the *NAME* in which it is applied. Hence the amount of water cannot be considered essential to the validity of baptism, unless it can be distinctly shown from Scripture that it is particularly specified. Till this is done; to say that this or that mode of applying water to any amount, in the *prescribed name*, is not baptism, is to assume what needs the clearest proof, and what cannot rationally be conceded without it.

3. "*Baptism is an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace, given us by Christ.*" I would not be understood, that it is an infallible sign; or, in other words, that all who have been baptized have the grace of God in their hearts, and are accepted of him; but merely that this is one of its designs. It is doubtless to Christianity what circumcision was to Judaism. This was an outward sign of interest in the Abrahamic covenant, and by consequence in all its blessings, present and future. It was the insignia of religious character, and tacitly said of all who bore it, he is a child of Abraham, a friend of God. But still, says St. Paul, "they are not all Israel who are of Israel. Neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children." That is, though they have the name of Israelites, and wear the Israelitish badge; and though they are the seed—the natural descendants of Abraham—they are not all of spiritual Israel, not spiritual children, children of God. Thus also of baptism. It is the outward sign of an interest in Christ, by faith—the badge of our profession. By it we publicly profess our faith in him, as the true Messiah, the Saviour of the world, and our sole dependence on him for salvation. Hence all Jews and heathens converted to Christianity are required to be baptized.

4. *It is a means of grace to all who are the proper subjects of it.* This the Scriptures place beyond doubt. When Christ commanded his apostles to "go into all the world, and preach the gospel," he added, "He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved." From which we learn that baptism is no less a means of grace and salvation than faith. The language of Peter is equally decisive: "Repent and be *baptized* for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Here "the remission of sins" and the reception of "the Holy Ghost" are proffered no less in connection with *baptism* than repentance; so, if repentance be a means of grace, baptism is also. The address of Ananias to Saul of Tarsus goes to the same point: "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling upon the name of the Lord." To these we may add the experience of the three thousand who were baptized on the day of pentecost: "They continued steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine, and in fellowship, and in prayer, praising God." The Ethiopian eunuch also "went on his way rejoicing" in the grace, doubtless, he had received in this solemn ordinance. To deny the connection of this duty, as a means, with the blessings here promised or conferred, is to deny the connection between the promise and blessing of God—the duty and happiness of man.

5. *Baptism is our pledge of obedience to God.* "Therefore," says St. Paul, "we are buried with him by baptism into death, that, like as Christ was raised from the dead, even so we also should walk in newness of life," Rom. vi, 4. And again; to the Galatians, who had taken upon them the responsibilities of baptism, he says, "Ye did run well, who did hinder you, that ye should not obey the truth." It is not only therefore a pledge of "God's good will toward us," as saith our sixteenth article; but it is our pledge to God, to the church, and to the world, that we will fulfil our part of the covenant to which we virtually subscribe, and into which we enter, by this rite. Thus, in our examination of candidates for baptism, we not only ask, "Dost thou renounce the devil and all his works?" &c.; but, "Wilt thou then," that is, after being baptized, "obediently keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of thy life?" Baptism, therefore, is the ratification of the covenant between God and us, in which God pledges to us his grace and good will, and we pledge ourselves to obey his "holy will and commandments."

II. *I propose to show, that no particular mode of baptism is specified in the gospel.*

In this position Pedobaptists perfectly harmonize; and it is on this ground that they have adopted several modes, and pronounced them equally valid. The advocates of immersion deny the position, and assume that one mode is specified, and only one; and hence that baptism can be validly administered only in that mode. Now, if they are right, the position I have taken is wrong and untenable. To establish this position the more firmly, therefore, I shall first consider some of the arguments they adduce in support of their exclusive mode, immersion. And,

1. It is argued, that this is the only mode, from the Greek word *baptizo*, which they say signifies to dip or immerse. This word, let it be understood, with its derivatives, is always used in the gospel to designate the ordinance of baptism. That it signifies to immerse, Pedobaptists readily allow; but that it signifies this, and *nothing else*, they deny. It is not enough, therefore, that the Baptists have proved, (though they may have done it by a thousand authorities,) that this word means to immerse, for this we have never questioned.

To give this argument the least weight, it must be proved, by good and substantial evidence, not that *baptizo* means to immerse, for this is not disputed, but that it has *no other meaning*. And have they done this? I fearlessly and unhesitatingly answer, No! Neither can they do it, for this very good reason—there is no such evidence in existence. The truth in the case is, *baptizo* means to dip or immerse: but, then, it is spoiled for the advocates of immersion by having, like almost every other word, several meanings; such as, to *stain* with blood—to *wet*—to *moisten*—to *pour* water upon the hands—to *sprinkle*—to be *dyed* or *colored*—to *wash*, &c., &c. Hear what the very celebrated lexicographer Schrevelius says on this point. The four definitions he gives of the word are, to *immerse*—to *wash*—to *sprinkle*—to *moisten*, or *wet*. Schleusner, whose lexicon is undisputed authority in questions of this kind, gives the same in import, though in a little different words. Parkhurst and Leigh give nearly the same; and, among a dozen other lexicographers of acknowledged eminence,

not one is found who does not give more than one definition to the word. The testimony of Greek critics is equally conclusive :—Says Whitaker, “the word *baptizo* signifies, not only to immerse, but to *tinge*, or *wet*.” Tertullian, who lived in the second century, within one hundred years of the apostles, says, that “*baptizo* means *not only* to immerse, but also to *pour*.” And were it necessary I might quote Danæus, Thomas Aquinas, Calvin, Wall, Owen, Lightfoot, Wickliffe, Clarke, Stuart, Poole, Dwight, Hemmenway, and a score more ; all of whom define *baptizo* to mean, not immersion only, but sprinkling, pouring, &c. I cannot, however, refrain from quoting Doddridge, as he is known to have had very strong partialities in favor of immersion : He says, “*Baptizo* may signify *any* method of washing, and is sometimes used in Scripture for washing things which were not dipped in water, but on which it was *poured*.”

But, were it entirely the reverse—did every lexicographer in the known world define the word to mean immersion, and nothing else, the Scriptures would stand in eternal contradiction of them ; for they use the term where immersion cannot be understood.

In Mark vii, 4, it is said, “And when they come from the market, except they wash, (or baptize, for the original is *baptisontai*, one of the modifications of *baptizo*,) they eat not.” And it is said, Mark xi, 38, that “when the Pharisees saw that Christ had not first washed (*ebaptisthe*) before dinner, they marvelled.” Can any one say the word, as here used, signifies immersion ?

Again : it is said, “And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing (*baptismous*) of cups, and pots, brazen vessels, and tables, or couches.” Certainly it is not impossible that they immersed these ; but is it *probable* they did ? Was immersion the mode they practised in washing such articles ? Is there a shadow of evidence in history that it was ? Is it the common mode ? To affirm it is verily to contradict both common sense and common usage.

Another passage, and it is the last I shall quote on this point, is 1 Cor. x, 1, 2 : “Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea ; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud, and in the sea.” This, no doubt, refers to the Israelites passing through the Red sea. And were they immersed ? Moses tells us, they went into the midst of the sea on dry ground ; which, together with other particulars of the event, preclude the possibility of their being immersed. Had the apostle said the Egyptians were baptized, we might reconcile him with Moses on the principle of exclusive immersion ; but as it is, we cannot.

To these might be added many other passages wherein the word is similarly used ; but these are sufficient. They prove beyond reasonable doubt the point in hand ; and must convince all, who would be convinced, were the number swelled to hundreds.

Thus it appears, from the testimony of the most eminent lexicographers and critics, and from the plain and unsophisticated word of God, from which there is no appeal, that *baptizo* means not only to immerse, but to sprinkle, pour, &c. ; and therefore proves no more for immersion than for the other modes in common use.

2. It is argued, that immersion is the only mode in which baptism can be validly administered, *from history*. That immersion may be traced to a very early date, cannot be denied. But this is not sufficient to establish it as the exclusive mode. To do this, the advocates of this system must show that the early Christians baptized by immersion, and in *no other way*. They may cite Mosheim and Milner, who say that immersion was practised in the early ages; or Venema, King, and others, who give it as their opinion that immersion was the ancient mode practised, the nine hundred and ninety-ninth time, if they have not already: but this will only prove what we are ready to admit. To make their argument valid, they must show from authentic history, not merely that immersion was practised in the early ages of the church, but that it was practised *exclusively*, and *alone*.

That they cannot do this is obvious from the following quotations:—Irenæus, who was born about the time the Apostle John died, says of a certain sect of Christians, that “they baptized by an affusion of water, mixed with oil.” Athanasius speaks of another sect, who baptized by sprinkling. Lawranu, who became a Christian about fifty years after the apostles, a little while before he suffered martyrdom, baptized one of his executioners with a *pitcher of water*. Did he immerse, think you? Eusebius says of Novatian, the philosopher, that “he was baptized in a fit of sickness, according to the custom of those times, (120 years after Christ,) by affusion or sprinkling.” And it is said of Eusebius, that he baptized Constantine the Great, while lying on his bed, in a solemn manner. Gennadius, who flourished about the year 490, says, “the person to be baptized makes confession of his faith before the priest—and, after confession, he is either wetted with water, or plunged into it.” Other authorities might be cited, were it necessary, to show with equal clearness that different modes of baptism have been practised from the apostolic age down to the present time; but these must suffice. Thus it appears history proves nothing for exclusive immersion.

3. Again: it is urged *John baptized by immersion*; therefore immersion is the only mode. To this I reply, Could it be demonstrated that John practised this mode, it by no means follows that it should be practised now, because John’s was not the Christian baptism. For it was not instituted by Christ—it was not administered in the name of the Holy Trinity—it was not under the Christian dispensation—and, finally, some whom he baptized were baptized again: whereas Christian baptism is an institution of Christ—is to be administered in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost—and is in no case to be repeated. But, how is it proved that he did baptize by immersion? Is it by his being in the vicinity of Jordan? This proves as much for pouring as immersion. It, however, proves nothing for either, as it does not appear that John sought this place on account of its convenience to baptize, but to preach. Is it by that passage, which says “they were baptized of him in Jordan?” This is not conclusive, even though we understand *in Jordan* to mean in the river, as our opponents would have us; because they might have had the water *poured* on them in the river, as well as to have been *immersed*, as thousands have had. But this phrase admits of a different meaning.

It is said by Greek scholars—and every man who knows the Greek alphabet may read for himself—that *en*, here rendered *in*, is translated in the New Testament *at*, more than one hundred times; *with*, one hundred and fifty times; *by*, about one hundred times. Hence the passage may read, with equal propriety, they were baptized of him *at* Jordan, *with* Jordan, or *by* Jordan; two of which readings represent *en* as rather a note of place than of mode, which was probably its design, as the parallel passage in another of the evangelists describes the scene of John's baptizing as being in Bethabara, beyond, or situate on Jordan.

Is it proved that John baptized by immersion by the passage which says "he baptized in, or at Enon, because there was much water there?" *Much*, it must be remembered, is a relative term of very indefinite signification. It may mean a common well, or a lake, the fountain of On, or Enon, or an ocean. What quantity it is used to designate here, therefore, it is difficult to determine. I may say, a spring, or several springs; and for aught immersionists can show to the contrary, this is correct.

But, to leave this term, it is inquired, Why did John go where "there was much water," if it were not to baptize by immersion? To reply, in the language of Mr. Fowler, "Why did the king of Assyria need much water, though he did not baptize at all? Plainly for the people and the beasts that were with him. It may be asked, also, Why are camp-meetings always located near much water? Plainly for the accommodation of the people and the beasts. John baptized in the wilderness—in Bethabara—beyond Jordan—and in, or at Jordan; and as the people flocked to hear him by thousands and tens of thousands, he located himself at Enon because there was much water there, for the accommodation of the vast multitudes that followed him. Much water was necessary, not for immersion, but to supply the immense multitude and their beasts, by means of which they had assembled from all parts of Judea, and from Jerusalem, itself some fifty miles distant. Now, suppose it should be said a camp-meeting was held last September in ———, 'because there was much water there,' would any mortal suppose from this expression, that the sole or principal object of meeting in that place was to immerse the people? Certainly not. Hence the expression, because there was much water there, furnishes no conclusion, nor even probable proof, that John baptized by immersion."

A word more, and I pass on. Matthew says, "Jerusalem and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, went out and were baptized of John in Jordan." The distance was considerable. Many who were baptized, doubtless, went not less than fifty miles. And for what did they go? To be baptized? They did not think of it. No; they went to see and hear the extraordinary stranger, who was exciting great attention among the people. Of course they did not go prepared to be immersed; or, in other words, they did not carry a change of raiment. Hence, if they were immersed, they were either immersed naked, or they suffered the inconvenience of a protracted and dangerous wetting. But, do you think, my friends, they did either? Make the case your own, and would you have done either?

To say nothing, then, of the impossibility of one man's immersing this vast number, the position assumed in the argument is entirely unfounded.

4. It is argued from the passage, that Jesus, after he was baptized, "went up straightway out of the water," that he was immersed; and that we should be also; or that immersion is the only valid mode. To this, it may be replied, Were it indisputable that Christ was immersed, it would still remain a question whether we should be, because Christ was not baptized, as we are frequently told, to set an example to his followers; but for an entirely different object. Hear his own account of it: "Suffer it to be so now—for thus it becometh us, (not to exemplify the mode of baptism,) but to fulfil all righteousness." Is it asked, What righteousness this fulfilled? I answer, The righteousness of that law, which required that every priest be inducted into his office by the washing of water and the anointing of oil. Thus Moses took Aaron and his sons, and washed or baptized them before the assembled nation. "And in conformity to this Levitical law," says Reid in his Apology, "Christ was baptized by John in the presence of many witnesses." Says Cogswell on this passage, "John baptized Christ, as an induction into the priestly office." "All the priests," says he, "under the law were baptized, and thus inducted into office, at thirty years of age—the age which Christ had attained at the time of his baptism." Scott, Clarke, Lathrop, and indeed nearly every other commentator whose works are much in use, say the same.

But to the question, Was Christ immersed? The affirmative of this question is based exclusively on the expression, "He went up straightway out of the water." This, it should be remembered, proves no less for pouring than immersion; for thousands have come "up straightway out of the water" who were not immersed, but had the water poured upon them. But the usual translation of *apo*, here rendered *out of*, is not *out* but *from*. In the first five books of the New Testament it is translated *from* two hundred and thirty-five times, and *out of* only forty-five times. Hence, according to the usage of the New Testament writers, there is five times the authority for reading the passage, "He went up straightway *from* the water," there is for reading it, "He went up straightway *out of* the water;" and therefore, if it prove any thing, it proves five times as much for sprinkling or pouring as it proves for immersion.

5. Again: the baptism of the eunuch is quoted by immersionists as conclusive. St. Luke describes it as follows:—"And as they went on their way, they came to a certain water; and the eunuch said, See, here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip," &c. On reading this passage, without prejudice, several questions naturally arise. And first, *How much* water did they find? Was it a little rivulet, spring, lake, or pond? Was there enough to immerse in, or not? Who can tell? No one. Supposing, however, the country to be like other countries, there are *ten* reasons for believing it a little rivulet, brook, or, in other words, a mere watering-place,

where there is one to believe it sufficient for immersion, since in traveling we pass *ten* of those to one of a larger kind.

Another question which arises is, How far into the water did they go? Immersionists say, the eunuch was plunged, because the text reads, "they went down into the water, and came up out of it." But if this phrase proves that the eunuch was plunged, it equally proves that Philip was also; for the same is here said of Philip that is said of the eunuch. Pedobaptists, to accommodate themselves to this expression, may say, they only went in over the soles of their shoes. And who can contradict them? This supposition as perfectly consists with the phraseology of the text as that of the immersionists. But, to vary the question a little, Which supposition is the most probable? The eunuch, it will be remembered, was on his way home from meeting. He had been to a meeting at Jerusalem. To suppose he had an entire change of raiment with him, is unreasonable. Hence, had he been immersed, he must either have denuded himself, or performed the rest of his journey wet, which would have been both ridiculous and unsafe. A similar inconvenience would have attended his baptism, on the part of Philip, being doubtless as unprepared for the water as himself. To have gone down to the edge of the water, or even to have stepped into it, would have been perfectly safe and convenient for both. Now, my friends, what do you say? Was the eunuch immersed, or not? Would you have been immersed under such circumstances? To me the supposition is preposterous in the extreme.

But there is another mode of disposing of this favorite passage. The Greek word *eis*, here rendered *into*, is frequently, though not always, rendered *to*, and *unto*. It is rendered *to* and *unto*, by the four evangelists, two hundred and eighty-five times; and it is rendered *to* not less than four times in this very chapter. The corresponding preposition *ek*, is often rendered *from*, as every smatterer in Greek well knows. Hence there is the same authority for rendering this passage, they went down *to* the water, and came up *from* the water, as there is for the present translation. So that this conclusive passage, instead of proving immersion the only mode, stands forth a powerful argument in favor of another mode.

6. The sixth and last argument I shall consider is that deduced from Rom. vi, 3, 4: "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that, like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Pengilly, the author of the ablest production I have ever read in support of exclusive immersion, says—and be it said to his honor, *it is all he says*—"The object of the Apostle Paul in this place, and its connection, is to show the church, to which he is here writing, the necessity of a holy walk and conversation. To this end he puts them in mind of their baptism, the profession they made in it, and the obligations they took on themselves to live according to those truths which the ordinance did plainly signify. Know ye not, says he, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus, into a profession of his religion, were baptized into his death, into a reliance upon, and conformity to his death; the great design of which

was to take away sin: and consequently, as our Lord died, and was buried on account of it, so should we be buried to the love and practice of it." Then follows this plain and striking allusion to baptism, in the fourth verse: "Therefore," (to express this very design,) "are we buried by baptism with Christ our Lord; and as he was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we are at our baptism, wherein we likewise are raised up to walk in newness of life." This was the best this gentleman could do, considering his creed, and his brethren seem not inclined to alter it. His exposition of the third verse is tolerably correct, though perhaps somewhat unhappily phrased; but, when he comes to the fourth, he is evidently embarrassed. In the third, he concedes that those whom the apostle addressed had been baptized. But in the fourth, to make *buried* certainly refer to the *mode* of their baptism, and yet to maintain the inspired language, he runs into a grammatical absurdity, from which he can extricate himself only by the abandonment of the passage. Hear him: "So we are (*now*, that is *sometime ago*,) at our baptism, wherein we likewise are, (why had he not said, *were*? Plainly because that would have been departing from the letter of the text,) raised up to walk in newness of life," &c. Let it be remarked, the apostle does not say, "Therefore we *were* buried," but "we *are* buried with him." The burial, then, of whatever nature it may be, is in the present tense, is now; and to suppose the apostle to refer to immersion in water, is to say, that both he and his brethren at Rome were in the very act of immersion, or were actually living under water at the time he wrote—for he says, "we *are* buried;" which could not have been true, though he had been buried a thousand times, if he had been raised as many. The plain meaning of the apostle in this passage is, that as the burial of Christ in the grave was the demonstration to the world of his death, so our baptism is our declaration to the world that we are dead to sin; and as his burial separated his body from the living world, so that it was no longer reckoned among men, so we are buried by the baptism we have received—that is, separated from sin. The connection between sin, and the world, and us, is completely broken, that we may walk in newness of life; which we could not do while alive to sin, and in union with the world. That this is the apostle's meaning, and that he had no allusion to the mode of baptism, is obvious from his proceeding in the two next verses to say "we have been planted," and also "crucified with him," by the same means, which certainly can have no reference to the mode of this rite.

Thus I have examined the principal arguments adduced by immersionists in support of their system; and what is the conclusion? That immersion is the only mode? That nine tenths of the Christian Church are yet unbaptized? Nay, that the Christian Church is restricted to the narrow confines of immersionism? Not so. If they prove immersion to be a valid mode, which I am not disposed to deny, others prove pouring and sprinkling to be equally so. If they prove it to be the exclusive mode, others prove sprinkling to be so too, as I shall soon show. But, certainly, they do not. And if these do not, the position is sustained—for what other arguments remain are hardly worthy the name. Firm, however, as my position stands, two or three further remarks may not be uninteresting. And,

1. "The translators of the Bible have not rendered *baptizo*, to *immerse*, or *dip*, in a single instance in the New Testament, though the word is used about eighty times. Wherever they have translated it, they have translated it *wash*, or some other word that does not signify total immersion. But why did they not translate it *immerse* sometimes? Did they not know the meaning of it? Did they know, and refuse to give it? I answer, Neither. Why, then, it may be asked, did they not translate *baptizo* into English? Because there is no word in English that comprehends all its meanings. They did not translate it *sprinkle*, because they knew it sometimes signifies *pour*. They did not translate it *pour*, because they knew it sometimes signifies *immerse*. They did not translate it *immerse*, because they knew it sometimes signifies *pour*, *sprinkle*, &c. Thus, like honest men, they submitted it to every man's conscience to practice that mode of baptism which to him should seem most proper."

2. I remark, if Christ and the apostles had intended to confine us to one and the same mode of baptism, they would doubtless have specified that mode distinctly. They have not left us in doubt whether we should believe in one God, or more; and had they designed we should all practise one mode of baptism, how easy it would have been for them to use words which could not be misunderstood. Had they used the word *dupto*, which unequivocally means to *dip*, we should all have been Baptists without controversy. Had they used the word *rantizo*, or *ekcheo*, instead of *baptizo*, Baptists would have been Pedobaptists, the baptism of John in Jordan and Enon, notwithstanding. As therefore they have taken the middle ground, and adopted a term to designate this ordinance, which means to *dip*, *pour*, *sprinkle*, *tinge*, *wet*, &c., we fairly conclude the mode is not essential to the validity of the ordinance; and that, therefore, they left it optional with the candidates.

3. Finally, I remark, that when the inspired writers wished to designate *dipping*, they used not the term *baptizo*, as they would, doubtless, had it meant no more than to *dip*; but *bapto*. Thus, "He that *dippeth* with me in the dish." "It is one of the twelve that *dippeth* with me in the dish." "Send Lazarus, that he may *dip* the tip of his finger in water." "And when he had *dipped* the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot." "And he was clothed with a vesture *dipped* in blood." In each of these cases the apostles have used *bapto*, and not *baptizo*. And it is remarkable, if the hypothesis of the Baptists be correct, that *bapto* is not once used in the New Testament to designate baptism; and it is no less so, that dipping is *not once* clearly designated by the term *baptizo*, or any of its derivatives. With these remarks, I now proceed to show,

III. *That three modes of baptism are presumptive: and,*

1. That immersion is, appears evident from many of the Scriptures and arguments used to demonstrate it, as the only mode. Though they entirely fail to do this, they furnish so much circumstantial evidence in favor of this mode, that to deny the validity of baptism thus administered would be disingenuous.

2. The same texts and arguments render pouring equally presumptive. For, *first*, *baptizo*, as I have shown, signifies to *pour*, as well as to immerse; and *secondly*, going to, or into, the water, is as necessary to one mode as the other.

The history of the Church is conclusive on this point. In the year of our Lord 499, Clodovacus, king of the Franks, was baptized by Remigius, archbishop of Rheims, by the pouring of water. Strabo says, "Many have been baptized, not only by immersion, but also by *pouring* water on them from above; and they may still be so baptized." In the year 858, about the time of Strabo, Nicetas Serronius speaks of those who "have been baptized by *pouring*." Erasmus says, "with us, (the Dutch,) they have the water poured on them in baptism." Would time permit, I might quote good authority from almost every century since the institution of baptism to show that pouring has ever been practised in the Christian Church. But I must pass.

3. And lastly, to consider *sprinkling*. That this mode was practiced by John and the apostles in the very cases referred to in proof of exclusive immersion is certainly possible. For, as I have shown, the original word means to sprinkle, as well as pour and immerse; and the circumstances attending these cases are not such as to preclude the possibility of sprinkling. If Jordan and Enon afforded conveniences for immersion, they did also for sprinkling. Hence, when we consider that John did not seek these places for the purpose of immersion, but was preaching here; and consequently these waters were nearest at hand when his hearers applied for baptism, that he practiced sprinkling not only seems possible, but even as likely as that he immersed. Therefore the Scriptures and arguments I may adduce in proof of this mode should be allowed their full weight, without any deduction from these cases. That the apostles practised sprinkling is to be presumed,

(1.) From the fact, that there is not an instance recorded in the Bible where water was sought by leaving the place of conversion. Now, it seems to me, if those who were converted in the house, jail, &c., had gone off in pursuit of water, and been immersed, the apostles would have made some mention of it, either incidentally or otherwise, especially if they had been rank Baptists, as is assumed. But, though they have given a particular account of their conversion, and of the circumstances leading to it, and the manner of their life after it, they have not said one word (strange as it may appear,) of their leaving the place of their conversion, and going down the banks of Jordan to be baptized! How they could have passed over so important an item in church history is inconceivable on any other hypothesis, than that no such affair ever took place.

(2.) Sprinkling is evident from the baptism of the three thousand on the day of pentecost. Look at some circumstances attending this event:—They were baptized the day the Holy Ghost fell on them: they were baptized by twelve men—the apostles. Could they have been immersed, think you? The meeting commenced at the third hour, or nine o'clock. The preaching, exhortation, prayer, and private instruction, necessary to be given to such a vast multitude entirely ignorant of the plan of salvation, must have occupied very considerable time. And is it probable, that, after the fatigue of all this labor, these men immersed two hundred and fifty persons each, which they must have done, had they performed alike? The occasion was entirely unanticipated. The people were strangers in the place—"dwellers in Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia," &c. Of course, as

they had not assembled for baptism, they had made no provision for being immersed. Had they been, therefore, it must have been with much inconvenience. This circumstance, together with the impossibility of the apostles immersing so many in so short a time, renders it almost certain that they were not immersed. But there was sufficient time for the twelve to have sprinkled them: for this they needed no outward preparation, and for this a sufficiency of water was at hand. Is it not highly presumptive, then, that they were sprinkled. Immersionists will say, No; sprinkling a little water in the face is not being buried—is not going down into Jordan. But such ridicule cannot invalidate this evidence. Though the ignorant and superstitious may not appreciate it, all who are not governed more by their creed than their Bibles must feel its force.

(3.) Again: that the apostles sometimes baptized by sprinkling is highly presumptive from the circumstances attending the baptism of Cornelius and his house. They heard the words of Peter, and “the Holy Ghost,” says St. Luke, “fell on them; and the gift of the Holy Ghost was poured out upon them, and they magnified God.” Then spake Peter, in the language of the text, “Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized.” Though this account is very circumstantial, not one word is said about their leaving the place where they were, and going to a river. Neither did Peter intimate that this was essential to their baptism, but the reverse. “Can any man forbid water?” These words he addressed to those of the circumcision—the Jews. And what could he have meant but this: Are any of you so prejudiced against these Gentiles, as not to furnish, or, as to forbid that water be brought, “that these should not be baptized?” If this was not his meaning, to say the least, he was very unfortunate in his phraseology, since his language cannot be construed to mean any thing else, without unpardonable perversion.

(4.) The baptism of the jailer and his house is equally decisive. It is said of him by inspiration, that “he took them (Paul and Silas,) the same hour of the night—(midnight,)—and washed their stripes, and was baptized and all his straightway.” Now, is it probable, that he left the jail at this hour of the night, at the hazard of his life, to go in pursuit of water to be immersed in? To settle this, imagine to yourselves that you see the converted jailer at midnight, while all nature sits shrouded in darkness, sallying forth from the shattered prison, amid flying doors and severed chains, under the high responsibilities of his office; and that you see him taking his family—his wife, children, and servants—from the shelter and protection of his mansion, to wander through the half-desolated city, whose inhabitants, terrified and amazed, are flying in confusion for refuge; and fancy that you see them nearing the pond or river of their destination, followed by the scrupulous apostles, who refused to leave the prison by other hands than those which incarcerated them, and going down into the water, that you see them immersed; and then follow them in their meandering return to the tumult of the prison; and say, Is it at all probable that they were immersed? Some immersionists, aware of the folly of supposing they left the prison, have created a font or tank in it, for the health and comfort of the prisoners, which of course afforded

exuberant convenience for immersion! But, with the same creative energy, and with equal propriety, might they create a coach and six for their comfort! Necessity, however, is the mother of invention; and it is not at all extraordinary that this very difficult passage for them has elicited such a development of their imaginative genius. Tank! there was none. History, together with common sense and common usage, laughs the idea to scorn. The presumption—the very strong presumption, supported by all the evidence there is on either side of the question, which is equally conclusive with any other the Bible furnishes on the mode of baptism, is, therefore, that they were sprinkled.

(5.) The baptism of Paul affords further evidence of *sprinkling*, as the apostolic usage. When the scales had fallen from his eyes, he “received sight forthwith, and arose and was baptized.” Had Paul been in the neighborhood of Jordan or Enon, this would have been referred to as a glorious demonstration of immersion; but as he was in the house of Judas, the advocates of immersion pass his case over by simply saying, that nothing is said about the mode. This, however, is not satisfactory.

If nothing is said about the mode here, neither is any thing said about the mode of Christ's baptism, or the baptism of the eunuch. The cases in this respect are parallel. Were Christ and the eunuch by Jordan, or some other water? Paul was in the *house*. Did their going down to, or into the water, prove that they were immersed? Paul's not going out of the house proves, then, that he was sprinkled. Is it possible that Judas had a font in his house? It is equally so that the water, down to which Christ and the eunuch went, was not sufficient for immersion; and if it were, they might not have been immersed, as has been sufficiently shown. If, then, those cases prove exclusive immersion, this and other similar ones prove exclusive sprinkling. The least, therefore, that even the immersionist can grant for this passage is, that it renders sprinkling highly presumptive. Having thus considered the subject as I proposed, I shall conclude with two inferences. And,

1. I infer, that for Christian ministers to adopt and practise one mode of baptism *exclusively, is an impeachment of the wisdom of God, and an infraction of religious rights*. The infinite God, governed by infinite intelligence, has seen fit in his wisdom, as we have proved, to leave the mode undefined. His language to his ministers is, “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature, *baptizing*,” (not *dipping*, *pouring*, or *sprinkling* them, but ‘*baptizing*,’ that is, washing them with water,) “in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” The *name* is specific, and so is the element to be used; but the mode is indefinite: from which we learn, that it is not essential to the validity of the ordinance.

But this exclusive system, with a sanctified audacity, repulsive to Christian modesty in the extreme, says peremptorily that the mode is essential—that immersion is the *only* mode; and boasting, with popery, of infallibility, it looks down with scorning contempt upon its less confident neighbors, and self-complacently smiles at the solemn ordinance, otherwise administered.

It is also an infraction of religious rights. God has made it the

duty of all Christians to be baptized. Accordingly he has commissioned his ministers to baptize them; and it is no less their duty than to preach the gospel. But this system prohibits it, and says to certain classes of God's children, *you shall not* be baptized. As for instance, those who are on beds of sickness and death, and those who live in exceedingly frigid countries, cases in which immersion would prove instant death. For its refusal to baptize them by sprinkling reduces them to the painful alternative of *committing suicide*, or going to the judgment unbaptized! thus contravening the economy of God, and becoming wise above what is written, do men bind burdens upon God's people, not only *grievous*, but *fatal* to be borne. The fact, that others will baptize such persons, agreeably to their own wishes, is no apology for those ministers who refuse. They shut them away from the ordinances of God's house, and send them unblest to the judgment seat, to stand up the undying witnesses of their unfaithfulness. O what a responsibility do they assume! How can they answer in that great day!

Since, therefore, baptism is the answering of a good conscience, not of the *baptizers*, but the *baptized*; and since God has left the mode undefined, and consequently submitted it to every candidate to adopt that most congenial with his own enlightened convictions, it becomes the duty of the minister, the servant of the church, to baptize them as they may prefer, though it subject himself to the vilest contempt.

2. I infer, *that making the mode of baptism the condition of church fellowship and communion is contrary to Scripture, and degrading to the principles of Christian union.* That this is done by a very large class of immersionists needs no proof. I refer to close communionists. We may be as pious as St. John; we may commune with God from day to day, and have fellowship with his Son, Jesus Christ; but, if we have not been immersed, they spurn us from the table of the Lord, and virtually say, "Stand by, for I am holier than thou." And no apology is satisfactory. We may urge our serious conviction of the validity of sprinkling; we may urge physical debility, which, in the judgment of medical men, would render immersion fatal, or any thing else, however rational; but all is to no purpose. It is enough for them to know that we have not been immersed; and with this knowledge they drive us from their communion, as though we were thieves and robbers. And at the same time, ridiculous as it may be, sit down at the table of the Lord with persons whose piety they have every reason to doubt themselves!

Now, were it certain that baptism is absolutely a prerequisite of communion, (which is doubted by many, and for the best reasons,) neither Scripture, reason, philosophy, nor common sense, requires that we should be *immersed*. We are only required to be *baptized*. The Bible says nothing about immersion, first or last. Making it, therefore, the condition of Christian communion is to "make the word of God of none effect," by human tradition! It is degrading also to the principles of religious union. These are *high* and *holy*. They are love to God and good-will to men: the loving God with all our heart, and our neighbor as ourselves. They are the fruits of the Spirit, *love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, meekness, patience, &c.* Principles, high as *heaven*—pure as the gospel of Christ. But this *contracted*

system, however much it may respect these principles, makes them subordinate to a disagreeable, watery, and sometimes very indecent ceremony: for all these avail nothing for us in this case, whereas *immersion* introduces us to the heavenly delights of Christian fellowship. Thus, the greater submits to the less—the Creator to the creature!

In conclusion, brethren, allow me to inquire, what further evidence we need? Can it be that a system which gives birth and succor to such principles and practices is of divine original? That the members of Christ are to be united to each other by *such* a bond? That the fundamental principles of our holy religion are as nothing in competition with a mere *rite*? No, *never!* The ties by which Christianity unites its votaries are ethereal. Common to angels and to men, they are designed to harmonize the universe of *soul* in allegiance to God, in one holy brotherhood, and assimilate that brotherhood to the throne of Heaven. They are deep laid in the moral system beyond the control of *locality*, *physical debility*, or *clerical caprice*. Thus they associate in one family men of all grades, of all nations, tongues, and languages under heaven—men of all parties and opinions, powers and conditions—with a firmness of affection which is not easily shaken. How sublime the plan! How admirably adapted to the broken and shattered state of the moral world! Connected by these ties, we are bound to give each other the hand of fraternal regard, though we may be disconnected in every thing else. Away then with the system which questions their competency as a bond of union, and imposes upon us its own *shibboleth*! May it die and be forgotten, that its shame may no longer stain the holy escutcheons of Christianity; and may the time hasten when Christians shall be *one* in *communion*, as they are *one* in *CHRIST*!

REVIEW.

For the Methodist Magazine and Quarterly Review.

REVIEW OF THE DIFFICULTIES OF ARMINIAN METHODISM.

BY REV. S. COMFORT.

The Difficulties of Arminian Methodism, embracing strictures on the writings of Wesley, Drs. Clarke, Fisk, Bangs, and others, in a series of letters, addressed to the Rev. ———. By WM. ANNAN.

THE above is the title of a work which recently fell into our hands, purporting to be a third edition revised and enlarged from the second; printed in Pittsburgh, Pa., in 1838.

In running over the list of recommendations, we found the names of the Rev. Dr. Alexander, of Princeton, N. J., and the Rev. G. W. Musgrave, of Baltimore; gentlemen known to us only by character, but for whom we have ever cherished sentiments of the highest esteem and the warmest friendship, both on account of their distinguished talents and their reputation for deep piety and profound erudition. Finding the names of gentlemen thus distinguished among the endorsers for the author, and the work sent out into the world with their sanction, we were led to examine the table of contents with the

greater interest and attention. The work consists of eight letters, addressed to the Rev. —, as in the title page. On further examining the body of the work,—to which we were led more by the promptings of mere curiosity than by any other motive,—we were constrained to admit that this is among the rare productions of the present age; and, to say the least, it does not want a high degree of novelty to recommend it, not only in view of the matter of the work itself, but also in respect to the author's style, argument, and mode of illustration. In proposing a brief review, let us here apprise the reader that it is not our design to follow the writer in every turn and crevice, into which, judging from the spirit and style of the work, he seems to have been led, in many instances, more from the predominant influence of a sort of petulant captiousness, than from a lofty principle of Christian liberality and candor. Besides, this would be to descend lower than we can obtain the consent of either our judgment or self-respect to go; though no lower than the writer has seen fit to place himself.

But there are some points of Methodist doctrine on which the writer has descanted with great freedom and boldness—doctrines which we have long held as most sacred, and which, unless we are quite mistaken in the meaning and use of the term *fundamental*, when applied to the truths of the gospel, must come in for a claim to that class as they constitute some of those principles which are essential to the Christian system. To these features of the work we shall principally direct the reader's attention. Some parts of the organization, economy, usages, and discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church have received an assumed construction and a forced application, which are no less unauthorized than strange and erroneous. These we shall not attempt to review.

In letter No. I., which contains the introduction to the work, Mr. Annan labors to show, that, in setting up the banners of controversy, he is acting purely on the defensive; and, therefore, for the part he may act, and for the ground he shall occupy in the contest, he claims from his reader not only full justification, but a liberal share of sympathy for the sufferings which the denomination, in whose behalf he comes forth as the devoted champion, has received from the aspersions, misrepresentations of her doctrines, and the misquotations of her authors, by ministers and writers of the M. E. Church. But, as we have not the authorities referred to, we shall leave these and other kindred questions to be decided by others who are better prepared than ourselves to determine the facts in the case.

Letter II. is on *original sin*. Here Mr. A. finds his first "difficulty" in Arminian Methodism, arising from "the vague, confused, and contradictory statements made upon this subject." After quoting the seventh article of religion in the Methodist Discipline, he holds the following language:—

"The corruption of nature, taught in this article, by which man is inclined to evil, and that continually, is manifestly the fountain whence flows all actual sin, the root of all bitterness, an evil of fearful magnitude—a curse of tremendous extent. Who then is the guilty author of this dread calamity, by which corruption, and misery, and death are handed down from generation to generation! Is it the infant or

the parent? Must we trace it back to Adam, the primitive ancestor of the race; or must we impute it to the Creator himself? In answer to these questions the Methodist standard of doctrine says not a word; and the members and ministers are left to believe and teach, upon this subject, whatever is right in their own eyes. Men may adopt their article and discipline, and yet maintain that God is the author of sin, the originating cause of that 'corruption of nature' by which 'man is inclined to evil, and that continually,' and thus the author of all sin. This their religious teachers may hold and inculcate, and yet, so far as appears, be good Methodists. The whole subject is submitted to the freak, or fancy, or frenzy, of each individual, whether preacher or ordinary member."—(Page 48.)

Now were there any thing in the nature and genius of that system of doctrine which Mr. A. denominates Arminian Methodism, having the least tendency to make God the author of sin; or that, by any fair construction, can be made to involve such an imputation on the divine character; then there would be some plausibility in the above stricture on the seventh article. But as it is, the stricture is perfectly gratuitous. Taking the system of doctrine as not only laid down in the book of Discipline, but maintained by those writers who are acknowledged by Methodists themselves as standard authors, and as Methodist doctrine is preached by her living ministry; it is difficult to conceive of a more probable reason for the above objection than that it is a mere pretext or shift to throw off the same imputation which many have regarded as a fair deduction from the peculiar doctrines of Calvinism: as if by retorting the difficulty back upon Methodism, Mr. A. supposes he will relieve his own doctrine from the embarrassment in which it is involved by this very natural consequence. As Methodism is, in the hands of the intelligent and unprejudiced, who take large and comprehensive views of the system, and who are free from the malign spirit of captiousness, there is about as much reason to object to the alluvial banks of the turgid Missouri—if the reader will pardon the comparison—and to fault nature in not having pent her in by continuous granite bluffs from her source to her mouth, lest in some "freak, fancy, or frenzy" she shall break from her natural course, or roll herself back to her source in the Rocky Mountains, sweep the Columbia from the channel which nature has dug and assigned to her, and empty herself into the Pacific Ocean instead of the Gulf of Mexico—as to fear that Methodism should make God the author of sin.

After assuming that the corruption of nature, as taught in the seventh article, is "necessary and unavoidable," Mr. A. endeavors to involve Dr. Fisk in a difficulty, which he seems to think is manifest from an expression the doctor employed, when, let it be remembered, he was canvassing a question the most foreign from the one under consideration, as growing out of the above-mentioned article. This will appear from the following quotation:—

"But Dr. Fisk, speaking as the organ of the General Conference, and making a mortal thrust at the doctrine of predestination, tells us, 'If God holds men responsible for what is *unavoidable*, what more could be said of the most merciless tyrant?' (*Disc. on Predes.*, p. 13.) It follows, therefore, that though 'man is inclined to evil, and that continually,' yet he is not 'responsible' for his wickedness, because it is

unavoidable: in other words, 'Original sin' is no sin, but a very innocent, harmless thing, which none but a merciless tyrant would ever consider deserving of punishment!" P. 50.

Leaving Mr. A. to enjoy all the satisfaction he can derive from the forced application which he has made of the doctor's language and meaning, which is so perfectly obvious when his words are thus tortured from their direct reference to Calvinistic predestination, into an application to the doctrine of original sin or depravity; we would beg leave to inquire of the ingenious author of the "difficulties" of Methodism, if it is not conceivable that the offspring of our original ancestors may be involved in the *consequences* of their original offence—unavoidably, if he please—without being consequently and necessarily involved in the *guilt* of their original *act*; as if, by direct personal imputation, it were their own? This seems to be the ground assumed by the objector. But to us it is as manifest as the meridian light, that to suffer the temporal consequences is one thing, and to lie under the imputation of the guilt of the first offence so as to be liable to eternal punishment on its account, is quite another. The former is true, but not the latter. Viewing the human family as it now is, and ever has been, since the moment the promise of a Saviour was first made, immediately after the fall of man, the first is true to the greatest extent to which the family of man is affected by the federal act of its great ancestor: but, in view of the provisions of the gospel, which are equally extensive with the effects of the fall, who will undertake to say, that the latter can be predicated of one individual of Adam's posterity? In other words, Who is prepared to say that one man, or a single child, of our fallen race, ever finally perished, merely through the imputation of Adam's sin, or because he was born with a depraved or fallen nature? If the utterance of such a declaration would not be to stain the immaculate character of God with a blasphemous imputation, we are perfectly at a loss to conceive what would. But that there is a sense in which it may in truth be said, in the language of Scripture, we are "conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity, and by nature the children of wrath," is not to be disputed. And that there is a sense in which it is equally true that the "free gift has come upon all men unto justification of life," it must be acknowledged, is declared by the same authority. And if there is a point between birth and the period when accountability commences, and personal guilt may be contracted, at which the dying child is not found within the range of the saving provisions and benefits of the atonement, the only conclusion with regard to myriads who have died at that age must be, that they have never participated in the saving benefits of Christ's death; or that he has died for them in vain: unless the difficulty can be relieved by introducing the Calvinistic scheme of unconditional election. This, however, will come under consideration in its proper place. Divested of all the haze, indefiniteness, and perplexity, which have been thrown around the question, by ignorance, error, mistake, or design, Methodism and Calvinism proper are, and ever have been, at issue on the extent of the atonement and the gracious provisions of the gospel.

It is one grand object with Mr. A. to evince the difficulty involved in the gracious ability with which Arminian Methodism invests the sinner; while, at the same time, it discards the *natural ability* with

which Calvinism, in its modern refinements, endows him. And if, as it is conceived, it would be to offer an insult to the common sense of every discriminating mind, to attempt to establish by argument the truth of the proposition, that culpability can only be predicated of capability, whether it pertain to right choice or right action; then it follows, by parity of reason, that the neglect or abuse of that grace, without which we could neither choose nor act contrary to the natural bias of our corrupt natures, must increase the magnitude of our guilt in proportion to the measure of grace we have received, and the circumstances under which we have misimproved it. But if, on the contrary, the sinner is endowed with sufficient natural ability, without grace, not only to choose, but also to perform the requirements of the gospel, then he may be both saved and lost while in a condition and possessed of a character totally graceless! We cannot see how it can be otherwise, if the natural ability attributed to the sinner be real, and not merely nominal. However this matter may appear to others, to our mind it has always been embarrassed by inextricable difficulties, notwithstanding all the labor of its advocates to disencumber it.

In further evidence of the candid spirit in which the author prosecutes his inquiry into the "difficulties" of Methodism, first creating a man of straw, then arraying him with all the hostile attributes of a cruel and destroying monster, and then encountering him in serious and determined conflict, sure to obtain a signal and decided conquest, we transcribe the following:--

"It follows, therefore, according to Dr. F., that he (man) has no power of voluntary choice, and is not a free, moral agent, until 'graciously assisted,' and made capable of voluntary choice—and thus, the doctor continues, 'through the grace of the gospel, all are born free from condemnation.' p. 30. Which is about the same as to say, that man is enabled 'by grace' to escape condemnation, which, being previously *unavoidable*, it would have been *merciless tyranny* to execute. A wondrous act of *grace*, truly, to *assist* the sinner to avoid a punishment which none but a *tyrant* could inflict." Page 52.

If the reader will bear two things in recollection he will see how Mr. A. arrives at the above conclusion. First, by a misapplication of Dr. Fisk's language, taking it out of its connection and reference, according to the doctor's obvious meaning and design, and laying hold of the epithet "*merciless tyrant*," as if he could hold the doctor responsible for any application or use he might please to make of it, because Dr. F. chose to employ it in a certain connection and in a given sense! And next, by an assumed and unwarranted liberty of understanding and explaining a writer by way of a mere forced *construction*. Let this liberty be taken with any writer, and what could he not be made to say? First, he has certain premises assigned him, without his knowledge or consent, and to which he has never subscribed; and then from these premises conclusions are drawn involving sentiments and declarations diametrically opposite to those which the writer would maintain were he permitted to define his own meaning, and were that meaning received without distortion or perversion. Than this unwarranted liberty of construction, nothing is more ungenerous and illiberal toward him concerning whom it is indulged. He is left, on this principle, perfectly at the mercy, will, or caprice of the man into whose

hands he may chance to fall. Pursuing this course with the writers on whom he has made his sweeping constructive powers to bear, it is not surprising to hear Mr. A. come out, in a short conclusive paragraph, in the following truly nervous and sententious style:—

“The result of the whole is, that we have original sin, which is no sin; depravity without fault; ‘inclination to evil’ without criminality; the penalty of the law inflicted on those who are not subjects of law; and wonderful ‘grace’ to deliver us from a punishment which we do not deserve! Such is the jargon which is published by the highest authority as approved doctrinal views of the Methodist Church.” Page 69.

Thus, if denunciation were argument, and if we were compelled to take mere assertion for conclusive reasoning and logical demonstration, the M. E. Church, with all her acknowledged accredited writers, would stand convicted of maintaining mere “*jargon*, as approved doctrinal views;” and that, too, by the grave decision of the reverend author of the “*Difficulties of Arminian Methodism*.” We must, however, beg leave to take an appeal from his decision to the tribunal of a candid and intelligent public. Methodist writers and Methodist doctrines are in the hands of an enlightened and discriminating world, at whose tribunal they may rest secure in the assurance of an impartial hearing and of a righteous judgment.

The next topic which Mr. A. brings under consideration, as connected with “original depravity,” is “the moral character and future destiny of infants.” On this subject he remarks:—

“It has long been a favorite device of sectarian zeal, to misrepresent and hold up to abhorrence the views of the Presbyterian Church upon this topic. We are charged with maintaining the everlasting perdition of helpless infants, principally on two grounds: 1. Because our Confession nowhere expressly affirms, that all who die in infancy are saved. 2. A second ground of charge against Presbyterians, of teaching that some infants dying in childhood are lost, is, that our Confession employs the phrase ‘elect infants,’ which is said to imply that some who die in childhood are not elect. Not to repeat what has often been said, that the objected phrase is perfectly consistent with the persuasion that *all* infants, dying in infancy, are elected, or saved by grace, from among the guilty family of mankind; and of course, that they will not be wanting, when the Son of man shall ‘gather together *his elect* from the four winds of heaven,’ Matt. xxiv, 31. Not to urge the fact, that the Bible nowhere *expressly affirms* the salvation of all who die in infancy, and is still further from teaching that any of them are lost, (in these respects clearly followed by our Confession,) we rather choose to turn this Arminian battery upon those who have erected it, and try its power upon the strongholds of the enemy.” Pages 69–72.

In immediate connection with the above, Mr. A. introduces a parallel between the phrase “elect infants,” as used by the Confession, and “elect children,” as used by the Methodist Discipline in the baptismal service. And this he regards as turning the “Arminian battery upon those who erected it;” giving us a fine example of the frank, candid, and Christian spirit, and style of argument in which his book is written. Moreover, in this supposed retort he seems to congratulate

himself on the adroitness and effect with which he has wielded what he calls the "*argumentum ad hominem*." But, if the reader has a desire to have the Calvinistic view of this subject, in definite terms—a view for which many have sought in vain, unless they could content themselves with mere implication, instead of clear and explicit declaration of real sentiments—let him gather it, if he can, from the following paragraph; in which it would seem Mr. A. would have us believe he has given a synopsis, to use his own words, of "what the Scriptures say upon the subject which is wrapped up in so many contradictions and inconsistencies:"—

"Our first parents, being left to the freedom of their own will, fell from their estate of innocence. 'By the disobedience of one, many were made sinners,' Rom. v. 'In Adam all die;' because all have *in him* deserved to die. 'By the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation.' Adam was a public person; he acted not for himself alone, but for his posterity; for them he was to stand his probation, and purchase the reward of life eternal; or for them to fall, and entail the penalty of the violated law: 'they sinned in him, and fell with him in his first transgression.' As a part of the threatened penalty, 'they are shapen in iniquity, and conceived in sin'—'by nature children of wrath.' Still they are moral agents, possessing freedom of will in the highest sense; they act as they choose to act, are under no physical constraint or coercion, and their 'inclination to evil' is their crime; their love of sin their condemnation. The stronger their depraved affections, the more intensely they burn in the corrupt heart, so much the more vile is the act, so much the more deep and deserved the righteous retribution. If, in the providence of God, man is *unavoidably* a fallen creature, 'prone to evil as the sparks fly upward'—if he has become so by the act of his original ancestor, appointed as his head and representative, let him not repine. Would it have been either *more wise*, or *more merciful*, to have ordered that each individual should enter the world in the infancy of his being, while yet his faculties of body and soul were in the imperfect and undeveloped state, *then* to stand his trial for weal or wo; or that one should be appointed, strong and vigorous, in all the perfection of original manhood, which the all-wise God pronounced 'very good'—that *such a one* should be given us, in whose hands should be placed our destiny, and by whose conduct should be decided the future character of his posterity! Could every child of Adam have looked on when the scheme was ordained in the councils of eternity, true modesty would have dictated the right answer to these inquiries. And had the result been, the establishment of the whole human family in perpetual holiness and happiness, every tongue would have celebrated the wisdom and benevolence of the ordination." Pp. 74, 75, 76.

Here, then, we have what Mr. A. fondly regards as the Scriptural view of this subject. We have given the whole paragraph, that the reader may be the better prepared to determine as to the faithfulness of this doctrinal portrait when compared with the inspired original. And what is the sum of the whole? Why, man is "*unavoidably* a fallen creature—he has become so by the act of his original ancestor"—but at this "let him not repine." Because such an arrangement were better than "that each individual should enter the world in the

infancy of his being, while yet the faculties of his body and soul were in the imperfect and undeveloped state, then [as an *infant*, of course,] to stand his trial for weal or wo—that one should be appointed strong and vigorous—in whose hands should be placed our [eternal] destiny !” Awful alternative ! Who can help shuddering at the thought that every human being ever born into the world, by his Maker, has been so circumstanced as to have his eternal destiny placed in the “hands” of another in such a manner as to be liable not only to fall with him, and with him to suffer the eternal sanctions of the broken law—not merely to sin with him, or in him *seminally*, having at the time only a *seminal* existence—but in a sense involving *personal* guilt and liability to punishment ; or else, as he enters into the world while yet “in the infancy of his being,” with “undeveloped and imperfect faculties of body and soul, *then* to stand his trial for” eternal “weal or wo !”

But, admitting all Mr. A. says of the federal relation between Adam and all his posterity to be true—which, we think, is far, very far, from being admissible—still he represents the Scriptures as saying not a word with regard to the influence which the atonement has had on the moral character, relations, and future destiny of infants, as they are born into the world, and die before the period of moral accountability. On these all-important questions there is a cautious reserve, if not a profound silence. Whatever may be the facts in the case, we strongly suspect, with regard to the author under review, that there is a reserved sentiment lying back which serves to him as a key to the whole matter, and which it was considered most prudent to conceal. Because the question, when pressed to its issue, must be decided in the affirmative or the negative : that is, all who die in infancy are saved, or they are not : they are “elected,” or they are not. But which is true Mr. A. hesitates to decide. He seems disposed to avail himself of the common expedient adopted very generally by those who subscribe to the Calvinistic view of this subject, in order to escape both horns of the dilemma at once, saying that “we must leave them in the hands of God, without determining their future condition—assured that he will do them no injustice.” This mode of settling the question is liable to several objections. First, It is applicable, properly, only to such as leave the world while uncertainty actually rests on their moral character. Nothing more can be said of such without the greatest presumption. But is this the case with infants ? Of what class of human beings is the religious and moral character more definitely fixed by the divine oracles, or may it be more clearly deduced from them ? Or, to go a little further back, and inquire whether in reality they have a moral character ? Taking up the question in this form—it must be conceded by all that they have, or have not, in a proper sense, a moral character. If they have not, they are incapable of both future happiness and misery ; and unless they are also divested of immortality, as they cannot without a moral character, good or bad, be fit subjects of either future happiness or misery, they must be assigned to a place differing essentially from both. Let us next take for granted that they have a moral character, and that it is clearly defined in revelation ; but that their future condition is not distinctly stated, and cannot be satisfactorily determined—and to what issue are we irresistibly brought ? Does it not strongly argue a serious and radical

imperfection in the system of revealed truth? This revelation is given to man; and in order to meet all the necessities of his condition, it describes every phase and aspect of his condition and character as they stand affected by the fall, and that system of salvation which this revelation professes to make known. But, on the principle just supposed, here is a character which is clearly defined; but that system of divine revelation, whose special object and design are to point out the fixed and governing relation between present probationary character and future retributive condition, as well as to instruct us how to obtain that character which has the promise of future happiness, and to avoid that which is threatened with future misery—that system of revelation has assigned to this character no certain condition in a future state! And were it even so, what wise end would be answered by concealing the future condition of infants? On the contrary, the faith and hope of the pious parent can scarcely refrain from following the spirit of its dying child to the future world. And who will say the bereaved parent has not the right, or that it is impious to ask, “Is my offspring happy with the church of the first-born?” Or will it be satisfactory to reply, “They are in the hands of a just God: he will do them no injustice!” This is equally true of every man; we have nothing to fear, not even the most vile, from divine injustice—that of which the divine nature is utterly incapable. Hence, on this principle, we have no cause of solicitude for ourselves or any other person. Therefore it is to us infinitely more Scriptural and satisfactory to believe that the fallen state of helpless infancy is amply provided for in the gospel—that this class all stand or fall together—that the future state of all dying in infancy may be fairly deduced from Scripture without distortion, forced construction, perversion, or misapplication—and that all dying in that state are unconditionally saved.

But we cannot dismiss this subject without inquiring for a moment into another reserved principle involved in the Calvinistic view of this subject, and which is doubtless the key to the grand secret of the whole matter. It is that which the advocates of this system entertain of the *divine sovereignty*, considered as the cause and source of *unconditional election*; and consequently its inseparable counterpart, *reprobation*. Because it cannot require argument to prove that the inevitable loss of some dying in infancy stands or falls with this doctrine. For if by the will, purpose, sovereignty, or decree of God, the eternal destinies of all men were fixed by an unchangeable decree from eternity, this is as true of the new-born infant as of the aged sire of fourscore years. To deny this, is to give up the doctrine, and discard the principle involved in the premises; nor can it be denied without repudiating the standard Confession of the Presbyterian Church. This would be fatally disastrous to Calvinism proper. And to attempt to save the system, by saying the future retributive condition of the adult is determined by his present conduct, is to set aside the divine sovereignty in the Calvinistic sense, together with unconditional election; because it makes his salvation to depend on his own conduct, and not on the sovereign decree of God. At least, so it appears to us; and this we conceive is the common-sense view of the subject, whatever may be the efforts made by the advocates of the Calvinistic

view of the divine sovereignty, by hair-breadth distinctions and subtle reasonings, to evade the natural result and legitimate bearings of this feature of their own favorite system. And that those who have supported this notion of the divine sovereignty, when pressed by the unavoidable consequences of their doctrine, have been compelled to resort to various expedients in order to screen their system from its destructive results and tendencies, is sufficiently notorious. Some have taken refuge in the notion that infants, dying in that state, are annihilated. But this doctrine is utterly unsupported by the word of God. Others have included all who die in infancy in the number of the *elect*. But the question still remains, Does their election depend on their dying while infants? If so, are they not elected in view of this event? Or, which is tantamount, Is not their election conditional, taking place in time, and not in eternity? In view of the whole, therefore, Mr. A. leaves us just where he found us. On the one hand, threatened by what appears to be the only legitimate deduction from his system, which goes to consign a part of the infant race, dying in that state, to eternal perdition; and, on the other, entirely disencumbered of those torturing apprehensions by which many a parent has been haunted at the moment of their dissolution—after all that he has said in what he would have us receive as the Scriptural view of this subject. Here let us ask Mr. A.'s permission to put the question directly, Why should we be so unwilling to avow our real sentiments on the leading questions in theology, when we have sufficient Scriptural data on which to ground them? Or else, let us frankly acknowledge at once our want of such Scriptural data. Were this candidly done, the cause of truth would doubtless suffer less than from an ambiguous expression, or a studied and cautious concealment of our real sentiments.

Letter III. presents the "Difficulties" of Methodism in connection with the doctrine of the divine foreknowledge. This second class of difficulties is set forth with the author's usual perspicacity, candor, and marked respect for the intelligence and orthodoxy of Methodist writers. Although this letter occupies no less than fifty-four pages of the work, our review must be compressed within a much narrower compass. The writer says:—

"The foreknowledge of God seems never to have been a favorite in the body of divinity current among Methodists." Page 79.

That this doctrine has always held its proper place with other kindred doctrines in the theology of Methodists, we believe can neither be denied nor disproved. But that it has ever had that imposing prominence which would eclipse others of equal importance, either in the sermons or writings of Methodist ministers, which it has received from Calvinist ministers, will not be contended. Holding foreknowledge and decree to be synonymous, or, at least, inseparable, and the latter occupying so large a space in the system, being in fact one of its most distinguishing characteristic features, it must be acknowledged that the doctrine of foreknowledge "seems ever to have been regarded as a favorite in the body of divinity current among" the great body of Calvinists. But, should this want of favoritism for this doctrine be charged to Methodists either as their misfortune or their fault, the following declaration of Mr. A., asserting the confused and indiscri-

minate views which Mr. Wesley entertained on this subject, if the fact is admitted by the reader, may assist us in determining to which account it should be placed. Mr. A. remarks:—

“Mr. Wesley confounded it (foreknowledge) with omniscience. In his sermon on predestination, he says, ‘If we *properly* speak, there is no such thing as foreknowledge or after-knowledge in God;’ and one of his modern disciples adds, doubtfully, ‘If we may apply the term foreknowledge to Deity.’ We are disposed, however, to think, that Peter spoke quite as ‘*properly*’ as either, when he said, ‘with the eleven,’ ‘Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God,’” &c. Page 80.

In this quotation, the aim and drift of the writer cannot well be mistaken. His object manifestly is, first, to involve Mr. Wesley in a theological inaccuracy in confounding foreknowledge with omniscience. But will this shrewd detector of Methodist difficulties undertake to show that foreknowledge is an attribute separate and distinct from omniscience? or will he prefer keeping on ground more tenable, and make it a certain exercise of that divine perfection? But which he maintains he does not condescend to inform us—showing how much easier it is to find difficulties in the doctrinal views of others, than to lay down a system of our own which shall not be liable to the same objections.

The next thing implied is, that Mr. Wesley has committed a capital theological or doctrinal error, of which he stands convicted on the testimony of Peter “with the eleven” apostles. But how does the case stand when we call in the united testimony of Scripture, collated with Scripture, applicable to this single point? “All things are naked and open unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.” “God is a God of knowledge.” “Known unto God are all his works, from the beginning of the world.” “His understanding is infinite.” In these passages foreknowledge is not once ascribed to God; nor is there the slightest shadow of contradiction between them and the declaration of Peter. By regarding this mode of expression as a mere *anthropology*, without contradicting Peter and others who speak of foreknowledge as predicable of God, all is rendered perfectly harmonious. On the contrary, by rejecting the idea of anthropology in the use of the term foreknowledge as predicable of God, and taking it in a literal sense, will it not follow by natural consequence, that after-knowledge must be predicated of him as well as foreknowledge? And moreover, does not this form of expression, or its equivalent, in several instances, actually occur in Scripture? Who can doubt, for a single moment, that in all such instances the language is employed simply by way of accommodation; that is, speaking after the manner common among men—a mere anthropology? By regarding all things past, present, future, and possible, as being actually ever present to the Divine mind, the whole matter is perfectly harmonized, consistent, and free from every difficulty, notwithstanding the facility with which Mr. A. multiplies them. But he has not yet done with Mr. Wesley. He says:—

“Hence in writing to Dr. Robertson, in answer to the inquiry, ‘How is God’s foreknowledge consistent with our freedom?’ he (Mr. Wesley) candidly replies, ‘I cannot tell.’”

Now, as we cannot call upon Mr. Wesley for an explanation of his

meaning in this reply, allow us to suppose that he gave this answer, in the spirit of that modesty and reserve which became so great and pious a man; answering just as he would a question respecting the manner of the unity of the Godhead, and a thousand other questions on which revelation is silent, and human reason too feeble to penetrate the profound mystery—questions on which we must believe the fact when a matter of revelation, the manner of which we cannot presume to comprehend: Or, in the chaste and appropriate language of Mr. Watson, “That the subject is comprehensible as to the *manner* in which the Divine Being foreknows future events of this kind, even the greatest minds, which have applied themselves to such speculations, have felt and acknowledged. The fact, that such a property exists in the divine nature is, however, too clearly stated in Scripture to allow of any doubt in those who are disposed to submit to its authority; and it is not left to the uncertainty of our speculations on the properties of spiritual natures, either to be confirmed or disproved.” *Institutes*, first edition, vol. i., p. 420.

But, let it be still further observed, that it is one thing to reconcile foreknowledge with the future actions of free, moral agents, and quite another to be able to see how the same actions of the same beings can consist or be compatible with an eternal, irresistible, divine decree, which is as comprehensive and boundless as the divine foreknowledge itself—including “whatsoever comes to pass.” This fact, if a fact it is, constitutes to our understanding one insuperable difficulty in Calvinism—a difficulty which to many minds appears not only irreconcilable, but to involve an absolute contradiction; unless, indeed, we can conceive it possible for a man to be held and bound by an irresistible decree, and yet be perfectly free at the same time. We confess ourselves of the number who not only disbelieve the doctrine itself, but entertain an opinion that there are few minds so peculiarly constituted as actually to believe either the supposed decree, or its reconcilableness with man’s free agency. This difficulty, however, has no existence in Methodism. She makes a distinction between foreknowledge and decree; and, as is obvious to us for the most evident reasons, a distinction which Mr. A., in his search for the difficulties of Methodism, appears not to have discovered; or, if he did discover it, he saw fit to pass it over without the slightest notice. But how we can avoid making such distinction is perfectly marvellous, unless we absolutely close our eyes against the difference between *certainty* and *necessity*, and between *knowledge* and *influence*, while viewing foreknowledge in connection with the liberty of human actions. This matter is set in the clearest light by Mr. Watson, speaking on the subject in his *Institutes*, in the following note, (page 421:)—“Certainty is, properly speaking, no quality of an action at all, unless in the sense of a *fixed* and *necessitated* action; in this controversy it is the *certainty* which the mind that foresees has that an action will be done, and the certainty is therefore in the mind and not in the action.”

After leveling some passing strictures at Dr. Clarke’s peculiar views of divine foreknowledge, Mr. A. conceives he has found a point in Dr. Fisk’s sermon on predestination and election which is quite open to criticism; a point on which the doctor has fallen into the common difficulties of Methodism on the subject of foreknowledge. As

the reader would have but a very partial view of the doctor's statement from the quotation of Mr. A., who has given us a part of two sentences, and italicised certain words according to his own taste, we will first give the author's language, and then Mr. A.'s comment. Dr. F. says:—

“Whatever God foreknows or purposes will undoubtedly come to pass. But the simple question is, Does the event take place because it is foreknown, or is it foreknown because it will take place? Or, in other words, Does God know an event to be certain because it is certain; or does his knowing it to be certain make it certain?”

On this Mr. A. offers the following comment:—

“But suppose we admit that foreknowledge rather *proves* than *causes* future certainty; and suppose we agree with Dr. F. that God knows an event *because it is certain*—we should be glad to be informed, how it will help the doctor out of his difficulties to say, that the actions of men, good and bad, are fixed in infallible certainty, and are therefore foreknown! Besides, as the divine foreknowledge is eternal as the being of God, if he foreknew the conduct of men, ‘*because it is certain*,’ then must all the evil actions of men have been fixed from eternity, in infallible certainty. Will Dr. Fisk inform us, *by whom*, or *by what*, they were thus eternally and infallibly fixed? Not by the creatures, unless they too were eternal.” p. 87.

The intelligent reader who is at all versed in the controversy on which Dr. Fisk was writing—a controversy which has continued between Arminians and Calvinists from the earliest date of the two systems to the present time, and which is not likely soon to terminate if this depend on their agreement—will see with one glance that Mr. A., in his comment on Dr. F., has committed the not uncommon nor unpardonable blunder which logicians call *petitio principii*, or begging the question; assuming in argument the very thing in question: viz. “the fixed infallible certainty of man's moral conduct.” This is precisely the ground which Calvinistic predestination occupies. And what is the more remarkable in this matter is, that Mr. A. should lose sight of the main point in the controversy with Dr. F.'s sermon lying before him; and then call upon the doctor to explain a doctrine which he expressly and positively discards and denies in the premises! Because the doctor has nowhere said that either the “good or the evil actions of men *have been fixed* from eternity, in infallible certainty.” This is a mere construction which Mr. A. has put upon his language; and yet, paradoxical as it may seem, he gravely calls upon the doctor to explain the “difficulty!”

The fact in the case seems to be this: That the omniscient God, to whom all the acts of all moral beings are ever present through all the periods and circumstances of their probation, and also of their retribution, should look through the vast labyrinth of the motives, contingencies, and ultimate preponderances involved in the free volitions, and unnecessitated actions of free, moral agents, where the most vigorous created intellect would be overwhelmed, confounded, and lost; and that he should see, without an intercepting cloud or the shadow of uncertainty, “the end from the beginning;” while, at the same time, those acts have not been “fixed from eternity:” this seems to furnish a grand, insurmountable “difficulty” in Methodism to sage Cal-

vinist divines. Whereas the truth manifestly is, according to the note from Watson quoted above, that certainty is no quality of an action at all, unless taken in the sense of a fixed or necessitated action—the very sense which Dr. Fisk discards, and in which Mr. A. applies the term to men's actions, as appears from his own words—that precognition which the mind which foresees has that an action will be done, certainty therefore being in the mind and not in the action. And if the Divine “understanding is infinite,” why hold it necessary for human actions to be eternally fixed in order that they may be foreknown? If God foresee or foreknow them at all, he sees them just as they *are*: contingent actions, which may or may not be, in opposition to necessary actions, as such; seeing, at the same time, what class of motives or principles of action will preponderate, through all the variety of condition and circumstance which marks the history of man's probationary conduct. While this view of the divine foreknowledge appears to be Scriptural, it is so far from involving any thing derogatory to the attributes of God, that it manifestly reflects infinitely more glory on the divine character than any system which confounds things so essentially different as foreknowledge and decree; or which makes the former depend on absolute predestination.

As it would contravene both the limits and design of this brief review to extend our remarks further on this point, we pass over the remaining part of this article, by simply remarking that a postscript is added on the burning of Servetus, to which Calvin was, at least, accessory, if indeed it were not done at his own instance. But, be this as it may, Mr. A. labors hard to wipe away the stain from his character and memory. This he attempts by collecting the testimony of various authors in favor of his distinguished talents and piety. But, leaving this transaction, with all kindred questions growing out of it, to others to be decided, we hasten to examine the third class of the difficulties of Methodism contained in letter No. IV., which is thus introduced:—

“The subject which next demands our attention introduces to our notice some of the worst features of the Arminian system.”

These “worst features of the Arminian system” grow out of the “difficulties of Methodism in connection with the doctrine of the atonement,” as contained in the twentieth article of religion in the Discipline. In order to bring this subject fairly before the reader, we beg leave to present it in Mr. A.'s own language, in the following quotation:—

“Upon the importance of correct views in reference to this great central truth of the gospel, we need not enlarge. Error here, like disease of the heart, will circulate its morbid influence through every member to every extremity of the system. It may therefore be regarded as one of the most exceptionable traits of Methodism, that in her twentieth article, she is fairly chargeable with espousing the cause of universal salvation. ‘The offering of Christ, it is said, is that perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction *for all the sins of the whole world*, both original and actual.’ But if the ‘whole world’ was embraced in the atonement, so that there was a ‘perfect satisfaction’ made for all the sins of all mankind, then must the Saviour have died for all the sins of the wicked, who had perished from earth, and were

in the prison of despair, at the period of the crucifixion ; which, besides the palpable absurdity of the idea, at once suggests the inquiry, ' Why then are they compelled to suffer, since a ' perfect redemption and satisfaction' have been obtained for them ? Again : If all of every description of character have a ' perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction,' completed for them, how can any be lost ? Wesley has answered, ' Because they *believe not* on the only begotten Son of God.' Here, then, is the dilemma : If unbelief be not a sin, it cannot be a cause of future misery ; it can do the sinner no harm. If unbelief be a sin, a ' *perfect satisfaction*' is made for it, as for all sin, and still it can do the sinner no harm ; *unless* a sin for which a *perfect satisfaction* is made, and the whole debt paid, can be again called up for satisfaction, and the debt again exacted. In the former case, no one can be lost ; in the latter, no one can be saved. The doctrine of a ' perfect satisfaction' for all the sins of the whole world must land us either in universal salvation, or universal perdition." pp. 133-136.

Allowing the author of these supposed difficulties of Methodism to have written the above in the spirit of Christian candor and meekness, and from a full conviction that these difficulties exist in fact and verity, which is the least that even charity herself can award any man sustaining the sacred profession of a gospel minister ; and not to have written in the spirit of captiousness and prejudice ; we remark that the doctrine of the article in question is Scripturally true, or it is not. This must be the case irrespective of the results to which it is supposed to lead, or the inferences which may be drawn from it. Whether it involve of necessity and by fair construction either " universal salvation or universal perdition," will be the natural inquiry after the orthodoxy of the main proposition is duly canvassed. The article maintains general redemption ; or, in other words, the doctrine being the same, the universality of the atonement. This has long been a mooted point between Calvinists and Arminians. And whatever may have been the improvements, refinements, and modifications of the doctrine of the former by the ingenuity of modern schools of divinity, on this point Calvinism and Arminianism, *i. e.*, Methodism, are still at issue. Mr. A. does not distinctly aver that he is the advocate of the old doctrine of a partial or limited atonement ; but, from the scope of his strictures, this may safely be regarded as not a doubtful inference. But were the doctrine made to rest on the proof positive that Christ died only for the elect, the doctrine of a partial atonement must fall to the ground ; because, it is believed, such Scripture testimony cannot be produced. The doctrine is found in that system of which it forms a prominent feature, but not in the Bible. On the contrary, when no favorite theory or system is to be sustained, on pain of destroying the harmony of the parts and the symmetry of the proportions of such system ; and plain, common sense is left free to follow out its own native dictates and deductions, from its devout contemplation of the fallen and lost condition of the world, and the divine provision for its recovery through the vicarious death of Christ ; to us it is not conceivable that the thought that this remedial economy is designed to benefit only a small minority of the human race, to the exclusion of the great majority, would ever have been conceived by the human mind, judging from its known and acknowledged constitutional prin-

ciples. The legitimate conclusion would naturally be—and it is the sentiment universally inculcated in the Scriptures—“that if one *died for all*, then were all dead,” &c. This text is rarely adduced in proof of this doctrine; yet it appears to us the more conclusive from the fact, that the declaration that Christ “died for all” is stated incidentally or assumed in the premises, and is not the main proposition in the argument; clearly proving that the apostle regarded this postulate, which he lays down in the premises, as a verity utterly unquestionable; hence he makes it the basis of an argument by which to establish another conclusion which he wishes to make appear equally unquestionable.

That Christ made satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual, including the “wicked who had perished from the earth, and were in the prison of despair, at the period of the crucifixion, involves, in the opinion of Mr. A., “a palpable absurdity.” He therefore asks, “Why are they compelled to suffer, since a “perfect redemption and satisfaction have been obtained for them?” In answer, let us inquire, how it was ever possible for them to be saved if redemption or satisfaction has ever been obtained for them? Yea, more: how could they be justly punished under the covenant of grace if never included in the provisions of the atonement? Will Mr. A. tell us how we are to brook this difficulty? Otherwise, starless and despairing must have been the gloomy night of their accursed existence, which never was, and never will be cheered with one ray of hope, nor ever echoed with one note of offered mercy! But was this ever, or will it ever be, the condition of one of the offspring of Adam? The nature and scope of the first promise, made to the original offenders before an offspring was born to them; the universal adaptation, scope, and genius of the divinely-originated system; all the figurative and emblematical representations of that system under the patriarchal and legal dispensations; the predictions of prophets pointing to the one great sacrifice already *prospectively* offered agreeably to the divine promise and purpose; with all the joyful declarations of celestial messengers announcing a Saviour’s birth, his own teaching while on earth, and the sublime and evangelical doctrines, preaching, and epistles of inspired apostles—all with divine and eternal emphasis, uniting in the solemn declaration, answer in the negative. And who that is not the veriest novice in the science of the gospel does not know that the atonement prospectively availed for man *before* Christ’s death actually took place, according to the dispensations which preceded that event, as it *now* does for us who live subsequently to that period. These are only different parts and sections in the one continued history both of the ruined race of man and of the remedial system which his Maker has devised for his salvation. Why then should one part of the same scheme be made to embarrass and perplex another; and that too by its professed friends and advocates; by men professedly initiated into these deep mysteries, and whose business it is to explain and enforce the provisions and sanctions of the mediatorial system!

In illustration of Mr. A.’s adroitness in detecting the difficulties of Methodism, he says, in connection with the above quotation, “If it be just to punish *this sin* (unbelief) with everlasting torments, after a ‘perfect propitiation and satisfaction’ have been offered for it, it will

be equally just to punish *all sin* for which Christ died." So it will, if that sin is not forsaken, but persisted in till the day of grace closes. And who ever believed the contrary? Or who would have conceived this fact to constitute a difficulty, had not the extraordinary sagacity of the learned author of the difficulties of Methodism first made the discovery? But the remarkable development of this faculty has enabled him to discover the following dilemma: "If unbelief be not a sin, it cannot be the cause of future misery; if it be a sin, a perfect satisfaction has been obtained for it, as for all sin, and still it can do the sinner no harm, *unless* a sin for which a perfect satisfaction is made, and the whole debt paid, can be again called up for satisfaction, and the debt again exacted." From these premises, the writer draws the following conclusion: "In the former case, none can be lost; in the latter, none can be saved." Therefore the doctrine of a "perfect satisfaction" for all the sins of the whole world must land us either in universal salvation, or universal perdition! A sad difficulty, indeed, if there be no escape from the horns of this dilemma; or if one or the other cannot be broken. But let us not despair till we try their strength, and the cogency and conclusiveness of this sweeping mode of reasoning is fairly tested.

Let us try the strength of the first horn, by inquiring how Mr. A.'s construction of this doctrine would apply to the sinner who had broken the ninth commandment: "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor." If false witness is a sin, a perfect satisfaction has been made for it; therefore it can do the perjured man no harm; *unless* a sin for which the whole debt is paid, can be called up for satisfaction, and the debt again exacted. In the former case, no false witness can be lost; in the latter, no false witness can be saved. To make our disengagement from this horn of the dilemma complete, we need only to call to our assistance the two following scriptures: "Without shedding of blood (a perfect satisfaction) there is no remission." "All sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men, but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost."

Let us now try the strength of the second horn; and, if we can disengage ourselves from this, this inextricable difficulty will at once vanish. The strength of this horn depends on the literal analogy between the atonement and the actual payment of a debt. But there is, in fact, an essential difference. If the payment of a debt be actually accepted, the debtor is, of course, exonerated. But, suppose it is the express understanding between the surety and the creditor, that on the payment of the debt by the former, and its acceptance by the latter, the insolvent debtor shall be exonerated by complying with certain conditions perfectly within his power, which conditions are agreed to at the time by all the parties; and that, on the debtor's failure to fulfil on his part, the whole debt shall still lie against him. Such an arrangement would be in perfect analogy with the nature and provisions of the atonement. But the literal analogy between the payment of a debt, and the unconditional discharge of the debtor, is obviously the ground on which this part of the dilemma, in the judgment of Mr. A., is made to rest. And as he has the affirmative of the question, the *onus probandi* rests on him. Had he given us argument, instead of mere assumption, he would have imposed on us the obligation of

showing the frailty of his argument, or of attempting to raise insuperable objections against the doctrine. But as it is, we shall content ourselves with simply showing how naturally the doctrine of universal salvation flows from Calvinism, instead of being a real difficulty in Methodism. This will more clearly appear by throwing the argument in the form of a syllogism, thus:—

All who are redeemed by Christ will be infallibly saved. But Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man. Therefore every man will be infallibly saved.

Again: God can decree nothing that is contrary to his own will. But he has decreed every thing that comes to pass. Therefore nothing that comes to pass can be contrary to his will.

And our Saviour says, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven." But if God can decree nothing contrary to his will; and if all the acts of men which come to pass have been decreed; and if he can never punish any man for doing his will, then every man does His will; and therefore, according to the declaration of our Saviour, every man will finally enter into the kingdom of heaven. Nor is this a deduction in mere theory only: how many who first began in Calvinism, to be consistent with themselves, never stopped till they ended in gross universalism, as the practical result.

But, in further proof that universal salvation, much less universal perdition, cannot be deduced from the doctrine of the atonement, as set forth in the article under consideration, let it be remembered that we are not always obliged to admit the truth of either the affirmative or the negative of every proposition: both may be false, but both cannot be true. And moreover, we are to make a distinction between redemption by purchase, and redemption by power—a distinction which has been made by the soundest and most profound divines; and which, as far as we know, has been denied by none; unless, indeed, Mr. A. takes upon himself the responsibility of doing so. Perhaps he occupies this ground already; at all events, this distinction seems entirely to have escaped his notice. While therefore it has been made by divines, both Calvinist and Arminian, whose judgment is entitled to respect on all questions in theology, there cannot be the shadow of a doubt that the article in question teaches the doctrine of universal redemption in the first sense, and in no other. This necessary distinction furnishes a key to this otherwise insurmountable difficulty. And it is thus transferred from the doctrine of the disputed article, on which the author of the "*Difficulties of Methodism*" has found so much occasion for animadversion, to his own want of due discrimination. Hence we conceive nothing is hazarded—because we only sustain the established principle—in saying that it is an eternal truth, which will be at last equally acknowledged both by the saved and the lost, that "eternal redemption," in both senses, was "obtained," not only for those who shall have lived and died in sin from the time of Christ's death to the end of the world, but for all who have thus died from the creation down to that event, as well as for the multitude of the saved in every age of the world. "Eternal redemption," by purchase and by power, was alike "obtained for" all; the saved received the latter as

well as the former; the lost refused the latter, and thereby eternally forfeited the blessings of both. One more remark, and we shall have done with this subject.

Mr. A. faults Mr. Watson in stating the question of the extent of the atonement as he has done, in the following quotation from his Institutes: "Whether our Lord Jesus Christ *did so die* for all men as to make salvation *attainable* by all?" Mr. A. says, on the same page,

"The true hinge of the controversy is the *design* of God in sending his Son into the world, and the *intention* of Christ in expiring on the cross."

Now, if it can be shown that it was "God's design" and "Christ's intention" to make salvation "attainable by all," Mr. Watson, after all, will be found to have given us the true hinge of the controversy. The whole subject may be brought within a narrow compass. It was, or it was not, God's design in giving his Son, and Christ's intention in giving himself, a ransom for all, to make salvation attainable by all. Any restriction or modification short of the unqualified affirmative, throws us necessarily upon the negative. If we say the merits of Christ are sufficient in virtue for all, but only designed for the elect, we still leave God's design resting on the negative; and the necessary consequences growing out of this view of the subject would be most embarrassing, not to say contradictory and absurd. On this principle, were the command of Christ to "Go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" fulfilled, it would be preached to thousands and myriads for whom God never designed to make salvation attainable. And so with the general and unrestricted promises and invitations of the gospel. Man would be invited to accept what God never designed they should receive; promises on this ground would be made which it was never designed should be fulfilled. The difficulty of reconciling this with the holiness of the divine character has long since been seen and felt by many; to them it has appeared impossible to maintain the doctrine of a partial atonement, without involving the supreme Being in the blasphemous imputation of duplicity and insincerity.

But, on the contrary, into what contradictions or absurdities are we involved by adopting the affirmative of this question? Let us lay it down as a postulate, that it was the design of God and the intention of Christ to make salvation attainable by all; and then let us see how this will tally with the fact, that some are not saved. Hence the question naturally arises, How does the admission of this fact affect the truth of the proposition? Will it be answered, that, on this principle, for such he must have died in vain; and that this goes to implicate infinite wisdom? But we deny the consequence in both respects. In a proper and Scriptural sense, even for the finally impenitent, Christ did not die in vain; nor does their being finally lost, though this result was foreseen by God, in the least implicate divine wisdom. Christ has still accomplished the grand purpose for which he was incarnated—to make salvation attainable by all—by removing every barrier to the exercise of divine mercy toward the ruined race of fallen man; and that mercy might be shown consistently with all the divine perfections, while they are not only perfectly harmonized, but more fully displayed than they otherwise could have been. It is true the finally

impenitent are irretrievably lost: but not because there is no "Mediator between God and man;" nor because Christ was not their Redeemer as a divinely appointed sacrifice, and their Saviour as graciously offered in the gospel: but because they refused such gracious offer, despised this divinely appointed and only sacrifice for sin, or "neglected this great salvation." He was Scripturally their "Saviour," in common with all men; but was not their "special" or actual Saviour by regeneration, because they lived and died in disobedient unbelief. In view of all this, the natural and legitimate conclusion is—not that any imputation is cast upon the divine wisdom, or the grand design of the atonement in the least frustrated—but that the final condemnation of the lost recoils on the sinner himself, and is eternally enhanced by his rejection of the purchased salvation; while the divine veracity, mercy, and justice are asserted and proclaimed in the sight of the universe of moral beings. The divine holiness, wisdom, and benevolence are all equally, distinctly, and harmoniously combined in the atonement and salvation of the glorified; yea, and in the condemnation of the finally lost. God is not only "just," and at the same time the "justifier of him who believes in Jesus," but the righteous Judge of the world.

From the following quotation the reader will be able to judge of both the orthodoxy and consistency of Mr. A.'s doctrine of the extent of the atonement, respecting the mere *statement* of which Mr. Watson is charged with unfairness:—

"Again: It is not denied, that it was *infallibly known* to Christ, when about to 'die the accursed death,' that many would not be saved by his sacrifice; but that their guilt would be greatly aggravated, if his blood were charged to their account."

If his death did *not* make salvation "attainable" for them, they *could* not be saved by his sacrifice; if it did, their guilt and punishment must be greatly aggravated by neglecting so great salvation. But Mr. A. inquires:—

"What is the doctrine of the atonement taught in the Scriptures? It is that Christ is 'the Saviour of all men, especially of them that believe.' The exalted character of the divine victim, and the intensity of his sufferings, impart a value to the atonement *sufficient* for a thousand worlds. On the ground of this sufficiency the gospel proclaims, 'Ho, every one that thirsteth,' &c. The sinner hears this call of mercy, and, despising its invitation, dies a suicide. If others are '*made willing* in the day of divine power'—if 'God works in them (irresistibly?) both to will and to do of his good pleasure'—and it is an act of infinite grace to *them*, but of no imaginable injury to those that perish; they remain precisely where they were, and *would have been*, if God had performed no act of his power to make others willing to be reconciled and restored to his favor. If this be '*partiality*,' show the injustice or caprice implied in the charge. If God has 'a right to do what he will with his own,' there is no injustice. If he may, for wise reasons in his eternal mind, *select from the mass of guilt and wretchedness the objects of his infinite charity*, there is no caprice. 'Who art thou that repliest against God.'" pp. 156–158.

Here then, at last, we have an avowal of the *sublapsarian* scheme, in terms too unambiguous to be misunderstood. We have, at least in

the opinion of Mr. A., a synoptical exhibit of the doctrine of the atonement taught in the Scriptures. Let the reader determine for himself as to its correctness, and also how it is possible for Christ to be "the Saviour of all men," in any known or proper sense of that phrase, without intending to make salvation attainable by all. If this were not God's design in the atonement, we confess that we are thrown back upon our former difficulties respecting Calvinism—difficulties which remain undiminished both in number and magnitude after all the efforts of her advocates and expounders to remove them. What though the "atonement is sufficient for a thousand worlds," yet if God only designed to make salvation attainable by a small minority, and to "select" them as "the objects of his infinite charity" from the remaining "corrupt mass of guilt and wretchedness," how are we to understand or justify the invitation, "Ho, *every one* that thirsteth?" &c. Who can explain the mystery, or "justify the ways of God with men," on such a procedure? Who can reconcile such contradictions? But while our faith cannot get over this difficulty without faltering and stumbling, it may not be the case with others. They may be so much in the habit of disposing of paradoxes, or they may be so attached to a certain system of doctrine, or their minds so differently constituted from ours, that when all is hung round with thick clouds and darkness to us, it may be a path light and smooth before them.

Having extended this review as far as accords with our own design, or probably the reader's patience in the perusal; having glanced at some of the "difficulties" which have been discovered in Arminian Methodism, we shall add in conclusion a very few remarks. We must take a rapid and cursory survey of the remaining part of this extraordinary production. There are some highly important doctrines which Mr. A. submits to his theological ordeal by which to test their freedom from error and difficulty; but they have stood too long, resisting the heaviest shocks of much more powerful antagonists than they have at present to contend with, to be soon shaken or easily disproved.

The captious and petulant author of the work under review—pardon these epithets—finds difficulties in Methodism "upon the subject of regeneration, and the evidences of a change of heart;" in reference to "sinless perfection;" with regard to the characteristics of a genuine work of the Holy Spirit; its connection with camp meetings; with respect to religious ordinances; the gross abuses practised in the denomination; in regard to its form of church government, which he esteems "unscriptural, anti-republican, unjust, and tyrannical." Such, then, are the remaining difficulties by which Methodism is encumbered on the showing of the Rev. Mr. Annan, and against which he has come forth as the daring champion of the Calvinistic host; and, like the self-confident Philistine, he seems to bid defiance to the camps of that portion of both Protestant and Catholic Israel—for he finds several points of contiguity and relationship between them—which he regards as being arrayed against him. But, if the reader has the curiosity to see in what manner he sets forth and sustains this part of his work, we beg leave to refer him to the book itself; and he will not only gratify his love of novelty, but discover this peculiar trait in the character of the work,

considering the age and character of the denomination whose doctrines and discipline are so wantonly assailed, that the work is a little behind the times. There has been a time when such distorted constructions of the doctrine, and caricatured features of the economy and usages of Methodism, might be palmed on the public as a true portrait. But at the present this can only be done to a very limited extent, and with a very small portion of community. To the intelligent, reflecting, candid reader, who takes broad, extended, discriminating views of every subject before he forms his opinion of it, and then does it without prejudice, the work carries its own refutation upon the face of it. And it will require no ordinary measure of that "charity which hopeth all things, and which thinketh no evil," to justify the spirit which characterizes this production. Whoever will take the trouble to peruse it, must not be surprised if he find men charged with inconsistencies and absurdities, at whose feet he would esteem it an enviable honor to sit. Nor must he startle, as if a prodigy had presented itself, when he looked for nothing but the most familiar objects, if he now and then hear the strange and unexpected echo of objections and abuses which he had supposed were long since met and refuted, in a manner the most satisfactory and conclusive. Let him remember that this is an age characterized by daring adventure, paradoxes, and recklessness. Nor should it be thought remarkable, if in the great and general, not to say headlong, movements of the present times, past scenes should occasionally be acted over again; or, like the objections of infidels to Christianity, difficulties multiplied with as much assurance of their serious magnitude and disastrous tendencies, as if they had never been heard of before. Let him expect to find comparisons drawn, and parallels run, between things and objects with natures so opposite, so different, and under circumstances so diverse, that it never once entered into his waking thoughts that analogy between them could have even an ideal, much less a real, existence. And if he have some practical acquaintance with the doctrine, discipline, and economy of Methodism, let him not hesitate to accede, that if the difficulties and absurdities set forth in this work have an existence in verity, and not in morbid prejudice, blind mistake, or blank and wilful error, he has many things yet to learn before he can claim correctly to understand the system. But let him comfort himself with one reflection—a reflection resting on the strong ground of full assurance—that the reverend author of the "*Difficulties of Arminian Methodism*" has not been delegated with plenary authority to act as the representative of the communion with which he is associated, and in whose behalf he has come forth, to hold up these difficulties to the world, sounding the note of caution, heresy, and alarm, with regard to the doctrines, authors, discipline, usages, and abuses of the religious association, which through them is made the object of his rebuke, criticism, and censorious animadversion. Many of the former will be as unwilling to endorse the sentiments, spirit, and style of the author, as the latter will be ready to repel the sweeping and ungenerous charges. Charges, often built on conclusions drawn from the most illiberal and forced constructions of acknowledged premises; and sometimes from assumed premises, which have been discarded by Methodists in the most definite and

positive terms. Or, perhaps, instead of repelling such groundless accusations, and explaining such far-fetched and sublimated difficulties, they will prefer to pass them by in silent contempt; feeling too much self-respect and consciousness of integrity of motive, purity, and correctness of principle, and orthodoxy of doctrine, to meet attacks and insinuations coming in a manner so low, that it could scarcely be lower, and in a spirit so hostile and captious, that, in the reply, meekness and candor would be sacrificed to bigotry and prejudice, and argument, explanation, and testimony, would not only be rejected, but perverted, and in the result worse than thrown away.

St. Louis, April 19, 1839.

For the Methodist Magazine and Quarterly Review.

PROFESSOR BUSH'S NOTES ON GENESIS

Notes, Critical and Practical, on the Book of Genesis. By GEORGE BUSH, A. M.,
Professor of Hebrew and Oriental Literature, New-York City University.

THE introduction to this work is valuable. It contains, in a small compass, and in the usual perspicuous style of the author, a large amount of interesting information. We would refer especially to the account of the early versions of the Bible. The comparative merits of the Targum of Onkelos, that of the Pseudo Jonathan, and the Jerusalem Targum, are shown by giving translations from each, and placing them in juxtaposition with the English translation. The reader can thus judge for himself, even from the brief specimens furnished, of the degree of value to be attached to these versions.

As it respects the translation so well known under the appellation of the Vulgate, the following remarks will no doubt tend to remove any unfavorable prepossessions against that work, in consequence of its "having been officially *authenticated* by the council of Trent, and made the standard of ultimate appeal" by the Roman Catholic Church. Prof. Bush here quotes from Campbell. *Prelim. Dissert.* X., part 3, sec. 6.

"It is no further back than the sixteenth century since that judgment was given in approbation of this version, the first authoritative declaration made in its favor. Yet the estimation in which it was universally held throughout the western churches was, to say the least, not inferior, before that period, to what it is at present. And we may say with truth, that though no judicious Protestant will think more favorably of this translation on account of their verdict, neither will he on this account think less favorably of it. It was not because this version was peculiarly adapted to the Romish system that it received the sanction of that synod, but because it was the only Bible with which the far greater part of the members had, from their infancy, had the least acquaintance. There were but few in that assembly who understood either Greek or Hebrew: they had heard that the Protestants, the new heretics, as they called them, had frequent recourse to the original, and were beginning to make versions from it; a practice of which their own ignorance of the original made them the more jealous. Their fears being thus alarmed, they were exceedingly

anxious to interpose their authority, by the declaration above mentioned, for preventing new translations being obtruded on the people. On the whole, therefore, we ought not to consider the version in question as either better or worse for their verdict. It is not intrinsically calculated to support Romish errors and corruptions, nor ought it to be regarded as the exclusive property of that Church. It is the legacy of the earliest ages of Christianity to the universal Church, much older than most of the false doctrines and groundless ceremonies which it has been brought to countenance."

We think it due to a work elaborated with so much care, and combining so large an amount of research and critical acumen, as Professor Bush's does, to notice, with some particularity, a few items in the author's extended exposition of the Book of Genesis; not with the intention of discussing mooted points, but rather to direct the attention of our readers to them, and to compare them with the views of others on the same subjects. Our time and limits will not, however, allow us to do the justice to the work in this respect which may be thought due to it.

In the first verse of Genesis, as to the word ברא, "created," Prof. Bush thinks "it is a matter rather of rational inference than positive affirmation, that the material universe was *created out of nothing*."

He founds his opinion upon the use of the word in other places. He adduces evidence from the use of the word in every other instance in Scripture except this, to show that the import of the term is twofold. 1. *The production or effectuation of something new, rare, and wonderful*; the bringing something to pass in a striking and marvellous manner. 2. *The act of renovating, remodelling, or re-constituting something already in existence*.

Upon this point, Dr. A. Clarke says, "Created," "Caused that to exist which, previously to this moment, had no being. The rabbins," he adds, "who are legitimate judges in a case of verbal criticism on their own language, are unanimous in asserting that the word ברא *bara* expresses the commencement of the existence of a thing; or its egression from nonentity to entity. It does not, in its primary meaning, denote the *preserving* or *new forming* things that had previously existed, as some *imagine*; but *creation* in the proper sense of the term, though it has some other acceptations in other places."

To this we subjoin the opinion of Prof. Stuart on the meaning of this word in this place; which he thinks, and as it seems to us justly, is mainly to be determined by its connection with what follows,

"Some have supposed that the word ברא, in verse 1, means only *to dispose of, to arrange, to form*, viz., out of materials already existing, *to reduce to order*. But verse 2 shows that no mere arrangement or disposition of matter can be intended by ברא; for after the action implied by this word had been performed, the *earth* still remained in a chaotic state. That the original matter of the *heavens* was in a similar condition is evident from verses 6-8, and 14-19. All order and arrangement plainly seems to be considered, by the writer of Gen. i, as having been affected *after* the original act of creation."

Prof. Bush, however, in opposition to these authorities, thinks that, in all the various parallel passages cited by him in which the

word is used, "the act implied by the word is exerted *upon a pre-existing substance*, and cannot therefore strictly signify to *create* out of nothing. Allowing then," he concludes, "that the materials, the primordial elements of the heavens and the earth, were brought into existence at an indefinitely prior period, the term 'create' may be understood as expressing the action of the almighty Agent upon the rude chaotic mass, in molding and arranging it into its present comely order and grand and beautiful forms. This view of the writer's language is undoubtedly more consistent with ascertained geological facts than any other, and it is certainly desirable to harmonize, as far as possible, the truths of revelation with those of natural science."

Were we to hazard a conjecture of our own on this point, it would be as we hinted above, to determine its meaning by the connection it sustains to what immediately follows. Allowing the word to be correctly used, as it undoubtedly is, in the sense attached to it in those passages quoted by Prof. Bush in support of his position, yet it seems hardly proper to call these passages strictly parallel passages; for the word could be used but once, unless in a precisely similar connection, to imply the creation of something out of nothing. The whole of what we call the present existing material creation was produced by one act of almighty power. Various combinations have taken place since in the different strata of the earth, perhaps, and in its form; but the act of creation was in itself one and complete. The word therefore could be used but once in its original sense; and that this was as the creation of something out of nothing, seems clear from the fact, as Prof. Stuart has observed, that after the action implied by this word the earth still remained in a chaotic state, as appears from verse 2.

It might also be proper to inquire, if the original word, translated "create," merely means the modelling of pre-existing matter, is not the plastic power of the Spirit of God, which moved upon the face of the waters, abridged? If "the term 'create' expresses the action of the almighty Agent upon the rude chaotic mass," what, we ask, are we to understand by "the Spirit of God moving upon the face of the waters," when "the earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep?"

We refer the reader to Prof. Bush's hypothesis, in his notes on chap. i, verse 14, to reconcile the apparent discrepancy between the creation of light on the first day, with the fact that the sun and moon were not created until the fourth day. Our author supposes that the sun was actually created on the first day; but, as during that and the two subsequent days, "the globe of earth was surrounded by a dense mass of mingled air and water, the rays of the sun would be intercepted: but that on the fourth day the clouds, mists, and vapors were all cleared away, and the atmosphere made pure and serene; the sun of course would shine forth in all his splendor, and to the eye of our imagined spectator would seem to have been just created; and so at night of the moon and stars."

In connection with this subject, we quote the following from Rev. G. R. Gleig's admirable "History of the Bible;" published, it is true, in a cheap and popular form by the Harpers, but none the less

solid and learned on that account ; a work which richly deserves to be in the hands of every student of the Bible:—

“ Perhaps there is no translation of equal magnitude, from a dead to a living language, which exhibits errors so few in number, or so unimportant in their consequences, as our authorized version of the Bible ; yet even that great work, admirably executed though it be, is not in every particular perfect. The account given there, for example, of the division of night from day, and the final arrangement of the heavenly bodies as parts of our solar system, is not so accurate as it might be, and has, we believe, in more than one instance, excited uneasy feelings in the mere English reader. Thus, after having been informed, at verses 3, 4, and 5, of the first chapter of Genesis, that the creation of light took place on the first day of the cosmogony, we are told, in verses 14, 15, and 16, that God, on the fourth day, said, ‘ Let there be lights in the firmament of heaven,’ &c. ; and that ‘ God made two great lights, the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night, and that he made the stars also.’ There unquestionably seems to be a contradiction here ; for if light was formed on the first day, it could not be formed on the fourth day also ; while the discoveries of modern science altogether preclude the notion, that either the sun or the moon is, in any sense of the expression, a light.

“ The truth, however, is, that the original Hebrew falls into no such mistakes as those incurred by our translators. The words employed by Moses, at verses 3 and 14 of this chapter, are totally different the one from the other ; the former only expressing the *matter of light*, the latter signifying simply an instrument by which light is supported or dispensed ; and hence the difficulty of reconciling Scripture with itself, and with the discoveries of modern science, attaches only to the English translation. Light existed from the first day, though divided, as has been shown, and shed in portions, as it were, over each globe in our system ; whereas on the fourth a centre for these scattered rays was established, and they were made to roll or collect themselves around it. Thus, the sun became a great light-bearer, or light-dispenser, immediately and directly ; whereas the moon, though an opaque body, acted a similar part toward this earth by reflection.”

The following reference to what seems rather an ambiguous phraseology as to the creation of fowl, as if fowl was created first out of water, and then, as it is stated in chap. ii, verse 19, out of the ground, clears up the obscurity. Prof. Bush proposes, that, instead of reading, “ and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven,” that we vary slightly the translation in the present passage, which the original will well admit, and read, and ‘ *let the fowl fly* above the earth.’ The object of the writer here seems to be to specify the respective elements assigned as the habitation of the fishes, and the flying things. In the other passage the design is to acquaint us with the source from whence the beasts and birds originated. They are probably here mentioned together from the similarity of the elements in which they live, and of the motions by which they pass through them.”

As to the topography of Eden, the Professor has treated largely. We shall only direct the attention of the reader to this point.

However he may differ in his views with the conclusion arrived at, that "Eden embraced the fairest portion of Asia, besides a part of Africa," still he will be pleased with tracing the ground in company with so clear and ingenuous a literary traveler.

Prof. B. possesses a peculiarly felicitous talent in illustrating the meaning of Scripture, by comparing one passage with another. This, it is true, seems to be an easy task; yet it requires skill, judgment, and patience, together with a familiarity with the original, to deduce all the good that may be obtained from this source. The following remarks on the passage, "And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day;" which in its English dress sounds so oddly to the ear, will be read with pleasure. "The epithet 'walking' is to be joined, not with 'Lord,' but with 'voice,' as it is in the original the same word with that used to signify the sound of the trumpet upon Mount Sinai, Exod. xix, 19, 'and when the voice of the trumpet *sounded long*, (Heb. *walked*.)' A voice may be said to *walk* or *go* when it increases in intensity, waxing louder and louder. The same term is applied to any thing which is capable of increasing in degree, as to a constantly brightening light, Prov. iv, 18: 'The path of the just is as the shining light which *shineth more and more* (Heb. *walketh*) to the perfect day;' and to the sea excited by a storm, Jonah i, 11: 'For the sea *wrought*, (Heb. *walked*,) and was tempestuous;' *i. e.*, became increasingly tempestuous. See note on Gen. xxvi, 13."

But while the notes on Genesis are critical, and as such of great value to the Biblical student, they are also practical, and thus adapted to general utility. As a specimen of the latter quality, we make the following somewhat extended extract in relation to the fall of our first parents. The observations are as forcible as they are lucid and consistent. They are founded upon chap. iii, ver. 6: "And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise; she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat; and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat."

As it respects the above transaction, Prof. B. says, "In regard to both it was their own free and unconstrained act; for however Satan may incite, he cannot compel. They could lay the blame of their disobedience upon no one but themselves; and looking to themselves, they could find no apology for their crime. By one rash act committed against an express command, and under circumstances of the highest enormity, they lifted the flood-gate which has poured in a deluge of miseries upon the world. Besides the loss to themselves of the image and favor of God, remorse of conscience, expulsion from Eden, the curse of toil, sorrow, and sickness, and the sentence of death to body and soul; all the sins, sufferings, crimes, and woes which have afflicted the earth, in its countless millions of inhabitants, from that day to this, are to be traced to that transgression as their fountain-head. The limited grasp of the mind of man is not adequate to take in the length and breadth and fearful extent of the evil which has been thus entailed upon the human family—an evil running parallel with the present life, and reaching forward into an unmeasured eternity!—an event so awfully disastrous in its immediate and its remoter consequences, especially

when viewed in connection with the divine attributes, naturally gives rise to many anxious inquiries which we may find it difficult to answer. We are prone to ask, Why in the full foresight of such a result God should have permitted man to be thus tempted, thus overcome, and thus involved in sin, misery, and death, when he could easily have prevented it? But the true question is, Whether he could have prevented it without doing violence to the nature of man as a free agent, and consistently with the great ends which he had proposed to himself in his creation. By his very constitution he was endowed with free will, and therefore liable to temptation and transgression; and infinite wisdom foresaw that it would be productive of more ultimate good that man should be a free moral being, though he might abuse his freedom, than that he should be made otherwise. He therefore created him, as Milton happily expresses it—

‘Sufficient to have stood, but free to fall.’

And having placed him in a state of probation, surrounded by motives, of which some induced to obedience and some to disobedience, but with perfect liberty of choice, an easy duty was enjoined, and the penalty of transgression laid before him. He had abundant power and abilities to enable him to stand the test. He was under no compulsion to disobey. His Maker had set life and death before him, and left it to his own unforced volition which to choose. Had Omnipotence interposed in these circumstances, and exercised a supernatural influence upon his freedom of will to prevent his sin, he had thereby destroyed the foundation of all the merit of obedience, and put it out of his power to make any trial of him at all. It would have been to govern him not as a *free*, but as a *necessary* agent; and any reward for his conduct would in that case have been as absurd as to reward the sun for shining, or the rivers for running into the ocean. Man therefore fell, not by any inevitable necessity, but by the abuse of his free agency; and to say that God did not interpose to prevent it, is merely to say that he did not see fit to do violence to the moral nature of the being he formed, but left it to be influenced according to the laws to which he had made it subject. And this he did, because he saw that, in its bearings on the vast scheme of his government, this course would tend finally to produce a far greater degree of glory to himself and of happiness to his creatures than any other.”

We shall here conclude our notice of this work. We have said enough at least to direct attention to it. The present volume is to be followed by another, which will complete the exposition of Genesis. We heartily wish the author success in his laudable efforts to promote a critical acquaintance with the sacred volume. W.

For the Methodist Magazine and Quarterly Review.

CARDINAL DE CHEVERUS.

Life of the Cardinal de Cheverus. Archbishop of Bordeaux. By the Rev. J. Huen Doubourg, Ex-Professor of Theology. Translated from the French by Robert M. Walsh, Philadelphia. Hooker & Claxton, 1839; pp. 280, 12mo.

THIS book, while it abounds in all the pomp and circumstance of popery, is written in so artful and pleasing a style, that it is well calculated to proselyte unwary Protestants to the Roman Catholic faith. Here you have no inquisitions—no racks, nor ropes, nor stakes, nor blocks—no selfishness, bigotry, nor persecution. No, no! You never from reading this book would imagine that her ladyship of Rome ever dreamed of such things. Nay, you would not fail to give vent to a flood of gratitude when you discovered the tender mercies of this benevolent little volume. After relating the particulars of the conversion of some Protestants to the Catholic faith, it says, the bishop “was desirous to learn of men so well worthy of confidence, whether, during the many years they had lived in the Protestant faith, they had not had some doubts as to its truth, and would have died tranquilly in its communion? and received an answer well worthy of note, that, until the day in which he had enlightened and instructed them, their conviction had been so perfect that it had never occurred to them to doubt—and that, through his means alone, truth had beamed upon them for the first time. This instance and many others consoled M. de Cheverus, by giving him reason to believe that numbers of Protestants might be in that state of good faith, or invincible ignorance, which excuses error in the sight of God; and he came to the conclusion, that it was necessary to be very indulgent toward those who are mistaken, and very cautious in condemning them. ‘God alone,’ he was wont to say, ‘sees the recesses of the heart; he alone is the judge of sincerity, and we must leave the secret to him.’”

To this *Catholic* passage there is appended, at the foot of the page, the following note:—“This good faith may be understood with especial ease in a country thoroughly imbued with prejudice against the Catholic Church. The idea of M. de Cheverus on the subject is entirely conformable to the general teachings of Catholic theologians. St. Augustin inculcates it, (*Lib. iv, De Baptism. Contr. Donat.*, cap. xvi;) and the faculty of theology of Paris says, in the same sense, (*Censure d'Emile*, proposition 32,) that ‘many, of whom God alone knows the number, although reared in communions separated from the Catholic Church, are excused in consequence of invincible ignorance of their schism or heresy. We do not look upon them as strangers to the church out of which there is no salvation. They may firmly believe many articles of faith contained in their religions which are absolutely sufficient for salvation.’ Finally; the celebrated Nicole, whose proneness to severity of doctrine is well known, says himself, (*De l'Eglité de l'Eglise*, lib. i, c. iii,) ‘According to all Catholic theologians, there is a large number of living members and true children of the church in the communions separated from her, since there are so many children who always form a considerable part of them, and they may exist also among adults.’” pp. 96, 97.

Is not this intended to assert that their severest theologians extend mercy to Protestants? Surely these calculations must have been made for the meridian of Philadelphia or Boston, cities "thoroughly imbued with prejudice against the Catholic Church," and not for Paris or Bordeaux, which are graciously freed from such unhappy prejudice.

Such a passage as the following, being the twenty-fourth article of the creed of Pope Pius IV., one of the standards of the Catholic Church, I should suppose would better suit these latter places:—"I also profess, and undoubtedly receive, all other things delivered, defined, and declared by the sacred canons and general councils, and particularly by the holy council of Trent; and likewise, I also condemn, reject, and anathematize all things contrary thereto; and all heresies whatsoever, condemned and anathematized by the church. *This true Catholic FAITH, out of which none can be saved,* which I now freely profess, and truly hold, I, N., promise, vow, and swear most constantly to hold and profess the same, whole and entire, with God's assistance, to the end of my life. Amen."

The cardinal is represented as a perfect pattern of learning, devotion, generosity, and zeal; and as such is held up to the imitation of all, as well the unbelievers as the faithful. And, indeed, as he is here depicted, there are very many traits of his character which may well be imitated by both Catholics and Protestants—particularly his spirit of self-sacrifice which induced him to make so painful and persevering efforts to convert the Penobscot and Passamaquoddy Indians, when he was a priest with M. Matignon, at Boston. He made a missionary tour once a year among these tribes, "and the labor he underwent was painful and incessant." pp. 60-68.

The volume is divided into five books. The first contains the life of the cardinal from his birth, at Mayenne, on Jan. 28, 1768, to his departure from France, in 1792; for he was expatriated during the French revolution. The second book contains that portion of his life which he spent in England and the United States, during which time he was exalted to the see of Boston. The third book exhibits his life from his return to France, in 1823, to the revolution of 1830; during this period he was called first to the bishopric of Montauban, and afterward to the archbishopric of Bordeaux. The fourth book contains his history from the revolution of July, 1830, to his last illness, which took place in 1836; during this period he had conferred upon him the Roman purple. He was raised to the cardinalate by the sovereign pontiff, at the instance of Louis Philippe, the present king of the French, and from him M. de Cheverus received the cardinal's hat, on March 9, 1836. The fifth book records the character and death of the cardinal: he died, rather suddenly, at Bordeaux, July, 1836.

This work has very much the air of romance. Indeed, we have no doubt that it was designed to be a perfect panegyric on the cardinal; and as such may be read with interest by *all*, with profit by *a few*, and with danger by *many*, especially the young, and others whose imagination is not properly balanced by judgment, and who are consequently more liable to be decoyed from the faith of God's elect.

OSMOND.

West River, A. A. co., Md., April 10, 1839.

For the Methodist Magazine and Quarterly Review.

A VISIT TO WEYER'S CAVE, VIRGINIA.

By Rev. J. H. Young, of the Balt. An. Conference.

FOR the extent, variety, and number of its apartments, and for the singularity and sublimity of its calcareous formations, Weyer's Cave is, perhaps, not surpassed, if equalled, by any known cavern in the world. The Mammoth Cave, in Kentucky, may indeed excel it in the capaciousness of its rooms, and the grotto of Antiparos in the dazzling brightness of its alabaster incrustations; while Fingal's Cave, in Scotland, is superior to it in the regularity of its basaltic columns: but, as a great whole, combining in itself every thing calculated to satisfy the eye of the curious beholder, or to gratify the mind of the devout admirer of nature, it stands alone on the list of subterranean wonders.

This stupendous cavern was brilliantly illuminated on the 18th of July, 1838, with nearly three thousand candles, and visited at the time by about five hundred persons. The writer of this sketch had the pleasure of being present on that occasion, and also of again examining it in all its parts, a few days after, under the direction of the proprietor, who acted as our guide, and who resides half a mile from its entrance. The country around it, to a considerable extent, is level and beautiful, while the soil is very rich and productive. The cave is situated seventeen miles north-east of Staunton, Augusta county, Virginia, and two miles from Port Republic, a small village, pleasantly located immediately above the junction of the south branch, with the middle and north branches of the Shenandoah river. The ridge in which it lies is called Cave Hill, and runs nearly parallel with the Blue Ridge—a chain of mountains by which the state is naturally divided into Eastern and Western Virginia—and is distant from it about three miles.

In the same hill are two other caves, Madison's and Weaste's. The first of these was so called, it is supposed, from the father of the late Bishop Madison, who lived near it, and who possessed a large tract of land in the neighborhood. A brief description of it may be found in Mr. Jefferson's Notes on Virginia, to which the reader is referred for farther information. It may, however, here be observed, that the mouth of this cave is only two hundred and twenty yards from the entrance of Weyer's. It was discovered and visited many years ago, and was then esteemed a great curiosity. It terminates in two different places at basins of water, thirty or forty feet deep, which are bounded very abruptly at the farthest extremity by perpendicular rocks. The earth in the bottom of it yields saltpetre, from two to four pounds to the bushel: two thousand pounds were manufactured in 1813-14.

The second was discovered by Mr. Edward Weaste, on the 17th of January, 1835. It contains twenty-five or thirty different apartments, some of which are very curious and magnificent. To follow the zigzag course of the path leading from the foot of this hill to the mouth of this cave, it is nearly five hundred yards from the entrance of Weyer's. Its direct length is about twelve hundred feet; but, to

pursue its various windings, the distance is not far from a half mile. It is not improbable that the above three caves, though they are supposed to be entirely separate, are nevertheless connected by some secret passages which still remain unknown. This opinion will appear more plausible, when it is observed that there is one room in Weyer's Cave which has never been entered by a single human being. Some have conjectured that fixed air, or carbonic acid gas, exists in it; and this is the reason why no person has yet had sufficient courage to make an entrance. For what is known to the contrary, outlets may be found in this unexplored chamber leading into both the other caves.

Weyer's Cave was so called in honor of Bernard Weyer, who lived between two and three miles from it, and who was the superintendent of a distillery in its immediate vicinity. He was occasionally engaged, in 1804, in setting traps for ground-hogs, which in those days were quite numerous. But one of these quadrupeds appears to have been too cunning for the hunter, for it carried off regularly every trap he would set for its apprehension. Vexed by these frequent disappointments, and by the loss of his traps, he determined to pursue the mischievous little animal into its hiding place. This he accomplished with but little labor; for he not only soon arrived at the spot where his traps had been safely deposited, but also at the opening of a gloomy cavern. It was afterward explored, with the exception of the above-mentioned apartment, and a brief description of its principal rooms will be presented to the reader in the following pages:—

On the day of the illumination, with a small company of select friends, we left Port Republic, and arrived at the guide's house about 10 o'clock, A. M. Here we found a large concourse of persons from different parts of the state, and some from other states; and it was soon ascertained that there were too many visitors together either for comfort in the house, or for satisfaction in the cave. At half-past 10 o'clock, having obtained our tickets of admittance, for which each gentleman had to pay a dollar, with the privilege of taking in two ladies, we commenced the march toward the place of entrance. The distance from the bottom of the hill, which is very steep, to the mouth of the cave, is one hundred and twenty yards. This is a well-beaten path, and has been passed over by persons from nearly all parts of the world. As we arrived rather too soon, we had to wait on the side of the ridge for more than half an hour, before the door-keeper and candle-lighters were ready to receive us. This detention was evidently beneficial to every one; for we were all quite fatigued and thrown into a profuse perspiration by the walk, as well as by the heat of the sun, which at 12 M. stood at 96 deg. Fahrenheit, while the temperature of the cave is invariably in summer and winter only about 55 deg.

At length, the time to enter having arrived, we handed our tickets to the door-keeper, and passed on. Before the entrance, and fastened to the rocks on each side, is a substantial wooden frame, with a neat little door in the centre, composed of thin, narrow pieces of board, in the form of a small clapboard, garden, or yard gate. The most uninviting part of the cave is a few feet from this door; it is about eight feet high, and not quite as many broad, but soon

becomes much lower and narrower, until you find it only three feet square. Moving down into a dark aperture, at an angle of 19 deg., not knowing what may lie before you, and taking care of both sides, and especially of your head, is very repulsive to a person who is unaccustomed to wander into the interior parts of the earth.

The first apartment you enter, twenty feet from the door, though not large nor of much interest, is, in some of its particulars, very beautiful, and is called the *Dragon's room*. To the right of the main path, which lies here in nearly a southern direction, is a curious stalagmitic concretion, of very uncouth form, and was therefore named the *Dragon*. Nearly opposite to this monster, and several feet above it, is the *Devil's gallery*. This part of the cave is greatly inferior to other parts both in size and appearance; but it is entirely too imposing for the residence of Satan.

Your course now will be a little east of south, and lead you through a high, narrow passage, sixty-six feet in length, and easily accessible. At the end of this you descend nearly perpendicularly for thirteen feet by means of substantial wooden steps, which have been placed there for the safety and accommodation of visitors. This ushers you at once into a very magnificent room, called *Solomon's Temple*, thirty feet long, and forty-five broad, running in nearly a western direction from the principal route. Immediately before you is the *throne* of this celebrated king; it is a large seat elevated several feet above the level of the floor, completely covered with the most sparkling incrustations. Turning around, and casting your eyes to the right of the steps within the walls of the wise man's edifice, you will perceive what some whimsical nomenclator has termed the *Falls of Niagara*. It has the exact appearance of falling water; but the column seems more broken or interrupted than the broad sheet that falls with so much regularity and awful grandeur over the stupendous rocks of Niagara. To the left of the steps is Solomon's *meat house*; and at the farthest extremity of the room is his *pillar*. This is a large mass of beautiful white stalactite, formed by the continual action of the water from the rocks above. Several pieces have been broken off by depredatory visitors; and the whole remaining portion has been somewhat darkened by the smoke of candles.

Having already been raised to no ordinary degree of astonishment by what you have just seen, and supposing that you have now certainly beheld the finest part of the cave, you pass the pillar of the Jewish monarch, and with little difficulty enter a room, the magnificence of which is, perhaps, indescribable. While the guide holds up a candle, in a tin reflector, fastened to a long pole, so that a fair view can be obtained of the ceiling of this chamber, you can do nothing but gaze and admire in almost perfect silence. This silence is only occasionally broken by an involuntary and scarcely audible expression of the mental excitement to which you have been brought, such as wonderful! grand! sublime! While a more ardent admirer of nature, with less self-possession, will exclaim, in an ecstasy, O, is not that beautiful! is it not beautiful!

Well, anxious reader, are you desirous of knowing what all this is. It is nothing but a large room richly studded above with numerous white and red *stalactitic radishes*, many of which are nearly as

transparent as glass! Hence this apartment is called the *Radish room*.

Returning into the principal path, directly opposite to the entrance of the temple, you ascend about twelve feet, and arrive at the *porter's lodge*, which, with the passage to the next room, is about fifty feet long, twelve wide, and from ten to thirty high. Leaving the lodge you come to *Barney's hall*, and are introduced to Com. Barney and his cannon, in the form of an upright stalagmite, at the base of which is one in a fallen or prostrate condition.

Near the centre of this apartment two passages lead to the left, and one to the right; the last of these is the main course. Of the two former, the first leads you to the *lawyer's office*, which is of a semicircular form, from twelve to twenty feet broad, and fifty feet long. In this *legal room* is a fine reservoir of pure water, formed by the continual droppings from above, where the weary wanderer may not only quench his thirst, but if pious, be led also to think of that fountain that flows eternally "fast by the throne of God." The second opening takes you into the *Arsenal* or *Armory*, so called from a very singular incrustation at the side of the room, named after the celebrated shield of Ajax.

Between the Arsenal and the lawyer's office is the *Hall of Bernard Weyer*, sixteen feet by sixty, very irregular, and may be entered at three different openings. To the left of this hall, which contains in one corner a natural monument to the memory of the discoverer and his dog, is another apartment, about forty feet long and fifteen wide, which as yet has received no name.

From the Armory you can get into the main passage without returning; but the best way, in order to see all, is to go back and take the right-hand path which has already been mentioned. This brings you through a low opening into the *Twin room*; in which are several beautiful pillars, connected with the ceiling above and the floor below, nearly similar in form and size. Near the path is a dark gulf, called the *Devil's bake oven*.* A few steps further is the *banister room*; this is thirty feet high, and received its name from many regular formations at one side, which resemble very closely the columns or pilasters of a balustrade.

The path is now due west; and a descent of thirty feet leads you into the *tan-yard*. In this room you will find several holes or pits, like tan vats; and also many large sheets of stalactitic hangings, suspended from the ceiling, in the shape of hides. In the same place are also the *French crown* and the *cathedral*; though one should suppose that a *tan-yard* would be a very unsuitable spot for a Catholic church, or the diadem of a monarch. This apartment, centuries ago, probably presented a more beautiful appearance than it does now. Some dreadful concussion of the earth, perhaps occasioned by the shock of an earthquake, or the sound of very loud thunder, has evidently marred its principal beauties considerably. Huge masses of rocks seem to have been moved some distance, and large portions of stalactitic hangings have been sepa-

* We wonder at the retaining of such names, at first given no doubt by the vulgar and profane, to designate any part of a place of so much resort.---
Eds.

rated from their original place of suspension, and now lie in broken fragments below.

You now change your course a little to the right, and ascend about twenty feet, at an angle of eighteen degrees, into the *drum room*. This room is small, but has several curiosities; one is the *natural stairs* by which you leave it, and another the *bass drum*. This in appearance is a regularly formed perpendicular wall of rocks; but in reality is nothing but a stalactitic partition extending from the top to the bottom. By striking this with the hand, or something else, it will send forth a sound very much like the tones of a drum.

The next apartment we entered was the *ball room*. It seems people *will dance*, whether they do it under ground or above it; for even in these sepulchral regions balls have been given. This room is one hundred feet long, thirty-six wide, and twenty-five high. From a precipice of thirty feet, at the eastern extremity, the tanyard can be seen. In this apartment are the following objects of curiosity:—The *sounding board*, the *side board*, the *natural candle-stick*, the *ladies' dressing-room*, *Patterson's grave*, the *town clock*, and *Paganini's statue*. To describe all these freaks of nature circumstantially would only have a tendency to draw out this article to too great a length; and yet each one is worthy of a particular description, especially that huge mass of calcareous matter which has been named in honor of the celebrated Italian musician. Patterson's grave is a small opening in the earth, into which a Mr. Patterson fell, but without injury, in attempting to find the mouth of the cave without light. This happened near a gradual ascent of forty-two feet, termed the *Frenchman's hill*; and was undertaken in imitation of an adventure by a gentleman from France, whose light was accidentally extinguished, but who was safely conducted through by the guide without a candle. But let us proceed.

In pursuing your route in a north-westerly direction, you will soon come to the *narrow passage*; this is fifty-two feet long, from four to eight feet high, and from three to five wide; and at the end of it is a flight of natural steps, called *Jacob's ladder*. Here also are *Jacob's tea-table* and *Jacob's ice-house*; and all this in a gloomy apartment, which is termed the *Devil's dungeon*! From the dungeon you pass through the *Senate chamber*, in which are the *music room* and the *gallery*; and then through *Congress hall*, which contains a curious *nose*, and the *lobby*.

By now keeping the main path you will be taken to the *theatre*; and here you will observe the *pit*, the *gallery*, and the *stage*; but by turning to your right you will soon discover that you have here reached the most dismal part of the whole cavern. No persons were permitted to enter this gloomy apartment on the day of the great illumination; and, indeed, this chamber had no light in it at all. But the writer was led into it in the following manner:—A few days after the 18th of July, he again visited the cave for the purpose of examining it more carefully, in company with the guide and several ladies. Having passed through every part but this, and inspected it at our leisure, the writer undertook to be the leader in finding the way back to the entrance. When he came to the forks of the path he at once turned to the left; but the guide, who

was in the rear, arrested our progress by exclaiming, "Ladies! are you all willing to follow Mr. Y.?" "We are all willing," was the answer. "Then," said the guide, "he is taking you right to the *infernal regions*!" And this was the name of the place to which we were ignorantly directing our steps. Not willing to be the leader to such a place, I turned aside, and requested the conductor to exchange situations. This granted, with some difficulty we entered a room more repulsive, and at the same time more valuable, than all the others. This is often called the *infernal regions*, but latterly it is better known by the *spar room*. It is at least one hundred and seventy feet long, and from forty to sixty wide. The floor of this apartment is from one to three feet thick, and is composed of different layers of the most brilliant deposits that have, perhaps, ever been discovered. Under this floor is a spring of very pure water, about two feet deep; and pendant from its lower surface is the richest collection of crystal, and white dog-teeth spar, I have ever seen. This is a source of considerable revenue to the owner; for many pieces of it have been sold for large sums of money; some for \$50, and others even for \$100. I have seen them in museums, and among the natural curiosities collected by the members of lyceum societies, as well as purchased for parlor ornaments.

To follow the main route usually taken by visitors, after leaving either the spar-room or the theatre, which lies to the south-west, you will soon be told that you are now in an apartment much larger and more magnificent than any other in the whole of this submundane edifice. This is *Washington's Hall*; and a more appropriate appellation could not have been selected. It is two hundred and fifty-seven feet long, from ten to twenty wide, and thirty-three feet high. The following objects in this hall are worthy of notice:—The *crucifixion*, or three crosses, not very perfect however, near each other, representing the death of Christ and the two thieves; the *statue of Washington*, seven feet high, and at least as many in circumference, formed by calcareous deposits; the *rock of Gibraltar*; the *pyramids of Egypt*; the *straits of Gibraltar*; *Cleopatra's Needle*; *Mark Anthony*; *Julius Cesar*, and *Pompey's pillar*; and the *eagle's wing*. These are all the most curious, and some of them the most astonishing formations, that the lover of nature could desire to behold. They impress the mind with an idea of awful sublimity; and the effect they have on one's feelings is almost magical. When we entered this room at one end, a band of music was stationed around Washington's monument near the other; and two or three hundred candles were arranged in order along the whole length of each side. As we approached the natural monument of him who was "first in peace, first in war, and first in the hearts of his countrymen," the music ceased, and we could not help fancying ourselves in the vaulted resting-place of the venerable dead.

In the centre of the hall to the left is a large opening which leads you into *Lady Washington's room*; in this are the *toilet*, the *looking-glass*, the *drapery* around the glass, the *fire-place*, and the *kitchen*. The wall between the two rooms is the rock of Gibraltar, about fifty feet long, ten feet thick, and twenty high.

We will now pass through *Jackson's Hall*, at the extremity of

which is the confectioner's shop, and the *bar-room*, in which is a fine spring of water—for the bar-rooms of nature are all temperance houses—and take a view of the *church*. The length of this room is one hundred and fifty-two feet, its breadth from ten to fifteen, and its height fifty! Here you will see, first, the *diamond bank*, brilliant indeed! Second, *the organ*. This is formed by a great many pendant stalactites, different in length and size, which exactly resemble the pipes of such an instrument; and, if a stick be rapidly drawn over them, various pleasing sounds are produced. Third, the *choir*. Fourth, the *steeple*, forty feet high. Fifth, *Lafayette's pew*. And, sixth, the *leaning tower of Pisa*.

Under the steeple is an arch elevated about ten feet through which we entered the *dining room*; here are a *natural table*, and a *saddle*. It is sixty feet in height. Further on is a part of the cave called the *Wilderness*. To the left of the path are *Bonaparte* and *his body guard* crossing the Alps. This name was given to a collection of stalagmites on a rock twenty feet high. Having viewed this for a short time, we next paid a visit to *Jefferson's Hall*. As you enter it you will observe to your right the *Tower of Babel*. This is thus described by Mr. Cooke, of Staunton, who drew a ground plan and section of the cave, a few years ago, and to whom the writer is indebted for several items of information:—

“Directly to your right as you emerge from the wilderness, there rises an immense mass, apparently of solid stalagmite, thirty-six feet long, thirty feet broad, and thirty feet high: this mass is beautiful beyond description, very much resembling successive stories, and is called the Tower of Babel! The most magnificent portion of the tower is on the back or northern part, but it is difficult of access, for it is necessary to climb up the surface of the rock fifteen or twenty feet; but the view amply repays you for the labor. For a few moments you can scarcely convince yourself that an immense body of water is not pouring over the precipice in a foaming torrent, so white, so dazzling is the effulgence of the rock; and when this impression is effaced, the words of the pious bard rush into the mind, where he describes the awful effects that will follow the consummation of all things:—

‘The cataract, that, like a giant wroth,
Rush'd down impetuously, as seized at once
By sudden frost, with all his hoary locks,
Stood still!’

‘One might almost imagine that Pollock had visited this wonder, and caught the idea so forcibly expressed above from viewing this magnificent scene.’”

Behind the tower are two apartments, one is called *Sir Walter Scott's Hall*, and the other his *library*; in the first of these is his *tomb*.

Jefferson's Hall, through which the principal path runs, is rather irregular, but two hundred and thirty-five feet in length. It contains the following formations:—First, *The half moon*; this is very beautiful, and exactly represents the queen of night in a crescent form. Second, *Minerva and her shield*. Third, *Niobe in tears*. Fourth, *The ladies' toilet*. Fifth, *The gentlemen's toilet*. Sixth, *The*

Gothic temple. Seventh, *Bruce.* Eighth, *The fly trap*; which is formed of two lamellar rocks, thin and regular, with the inner edges united, and the outer spreading out several feet apart. In a recess to the left of the fly trap is another fine spring of water. When you have gone as far as you can go, at the very extremity of the recess, you will meet with the *source of the Nile*! This is a fourth spring of pure water, crusted over with a pellicle of stalagmite, which has been perforated to gain access to the water below. Nearly opposite to the gentleman's toilet is a large rock, fifty feet long, and thirty high and deep, completely covered with an incrustation as white as snow; hence it is called *snow hill*.

After having wandered for several hours through this silent and gloomy laboratory of nature, (if this expression may be used in such a connection,) we at length began to retrace our steps toward the place of entrance. In returning the guide led us somewhat out of the main course, and conducted us into the *Garden of Eden*. On the road to this delightful spot we passed *Mount Blanc*, which is a high inaccessible rock. In the garden are the *Baniam tree*, and *Adam's bed-chamber*. Some persons have thought this the most beautiful and interesting part of the cave. The stalactites are very singularly arranged, and are, perhaps, larger than anywhere else, except in the tan-yard. These are suspended from the roof; and the stalagmites have ascended from the floor and formed a union with them. They have been compared to the folds of heavy drapery, and are quite transparent. From the garden of Eden we took our "solitary way," as Milton says of Adam and Eve; and very soon the world was all before us.

Harrisonburg, Va., 1838.

LITERARY NOTICES.

History of the Methodist Episcopal Church. By NATHAN BANGS, D.D. In two volumes. New-York: Published by T. Mason & G. Lane, for the Methodist Episcopal Church, at the Conference Office, 200 Mulberry-street.

NOTHING could be more timely than the preparation of a history of the Methodist Episcopal Church by one so well qualified in every respect for the task as Dr. Bangs is, in consequence of his personal knowledge of the transactions of its principal judicatories for many years past, and his official connection with its periodicals. There are many still living who can attest the correctness of what he has recorded; or, if in any case he has been misled by defective data, they may detect the error, and furnish the information necessary to correct it. We have reason to believe, however, that the personal knowledge of facts which aged ministers and members may possess, will seldom, if in any case, be found to be at variance with the record. Still, the circumstance that this history is published while many persons are still living who have been familiar with the events and transactions which form the base of it, especially since the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America, will be a guaranty for its authenticity, to future generations. This history will undoubtedly be appealed to, in a future day, as an authen-

tic work of reference. For this reason especially we say, it is a timely production.

The first volume has already reached its fourth edition, so rapid have been the sales; and the second volume is now out, and ready for delivery. Those who have ordered the first have no doubt done so with a view of having the second also; and now that both are ready for delivery, all who wish the work will forthwith forward their orders. The true character of Methodism is too little understood by even many who are members of the Church, and less by many others who take it upon themselves to animadvert, with much positiveness, upon its doctrines and institutions. To all such as feel any interest in knowing what it is, we recommend Dr. Bangs' History, published by T. Mason and G. Lane, at the Conference Office.

Professor Bush's Hebrew Grammar.

THIS is a new and greatly improved edition of the work, just issued from the press. From a thorough examination of the work competent judges rank it among the standard Hebrew Manuals of the day. It is at once simple and scientific. While the author has throughout studied the wants of the mere tyro, he has also opened an ample field for those who wish to go beyond *facts* to *reasons*.

In the preface, the author says:—"As a marked advance has been made of late years in explaining the reasons of many of the facts of the language, it seemed desirable to unite with the purposed simplicity of the former treatise such a scientific view of the interior principles and structure of the Hebrew as should satisfy the inquiries of the intelligent learner." Prof. B. has made a judicious use of the works of Gesenius, Ewald, Jahn, Buxtorff, Schroeder, Opatius, Roorda, Stuart, Hurwitz, and Lee.

The sheets of the latter half of the Grammar have been under the keen inspection of Prof. J. Seixas, a celebrated Hebrew scholar and instructor.

On the whole then we rejoice in the appearance of this Grammar as calculated to excite a new interest and impulse, as well as to afford new facilities to the study of this ancient and venerable language.

We are credibly informed that this work will be used as a text-book in several colleges and theological seminaries; the sheets having been examined previously to its appearance in public. It is beautifully printed on fine paper; and with the exception of some typographical errors, which it is next to impossible to avoid, it will compare with the very best works on Hebrew philology.

An Examination of the System of New Divinity, or New-School Theology. By Rev. FRANCIS HODGSON, of the New-York Conference. New-York: Published by T. Mason & G. Lane, for the Methodist Episcopal Church, at the Conference Office, 200 Mulberry-street. 1839. 12mo. pp. 416.

IN this volume are imbodied the essays on New Divinity published in the Christian Advocate and Journal, over the signature F. H., as revised and corrected by the author. This circumstance renders it unnecessary to say much of the character of the work, other than

that its publication in book form has been recommended by three several annual conferences.

When it is borne in mind that the preachers, usually denominated New-School divines, have adopted a phraseology in illustrating and enforcing their doctrines, especially in their public administrations, which leaves an impression on the minds of many that they have actually abandoned the peculiarities of the Calvinistic creed, and come over to Arminianism, it is due to them as well as to all others concerned, that the subject be investigated and placed in its true light. It is idle to think of bringing the public mind into a state of indifference respecting the subject of doctrines, particularly those on which the principal denominations of evangelical Christians are divided. And as a difference of opinion in these matters does not constitute a necessary barrier against that union of spirit which all the truly pious possess and cherish, we do not conceive that it would be even desirable to render men less interested respecting the faith they profess than they are wont to be. The main thing, and that which all should labor to promote, is to teach men, by precept and example, to express their differences of opinion in the spirit of candor and Christian forbearance.

The object of the work before us is, professedly, to place the subject in question in its true light, that the reader may examine it, and judge for himself. How far the writer has succeeded in this object, we leave to those who may read his work, barely remarking, that in so far as we have been able to examine his references, we believe he has been faithful in quoting the authors to whom he refers in his strictures on New Divinity, and treated them with candor and Christian courtesy.

The Life of Darcy, Lady Maxwell, of Pollock; late of Edinburgh: compiled from her voluminous diary and correspondence, and from other authentic documents. By the Rev. JOHN LANCASTER. New-York: Published by T. Mason & G. Lane, 200 Mulberry-st. 12mo. pp. 407.

THIS is a new edition of the Life of Lady Maxwell, on fine paper, well and handsomely bound in cambric, or sheep. Price \$1.

The first edition of this very interesting biography was published in two volumes, 12mo., at \$1 per volume. This new edition contains the two volumes in one, at half the price. We are persuaded the more this work is known to our intelligent readers, and to pious females especially, the more highly it will be prized. Let it go in company with the Life of Mrs. Fletcher. Mr. Wesley corresponded with Lady Maxwell, and in his "Select Letters, chiefly on Personal Religion," recently published at the Book Concern, are found not less than eighteen of his letters to her.

The Centenary of Wesleyan Methodism: A brief sketch of the Rise, Progress, and Present State of the Wesleyan Methodist Societies throughout the World. By THOMAS JACKSON, President of the [British] Conference. New-York: Published by T. Mason & G. Lane, for the Methodist Episcopal Church, at the Conference Office, 200 Mulberry-st. 1839. 12mo. pp. 240.

THIS is a reprint from the London copy, and will be read with as much interest on this as on the other side of the Atlantic. It contains, in a condensed form, a brief sketch of the rise, progress,

and present state of Wesleyan Methodism throughout the world; and is embellished with a beautiful likeness of Mr. Wesley, from a steel engraving.

Commentary on the New Testament. By Rev. JOSEPH BENSON. Two volumes imperial 8vo., the size of the new edition of Dr. A. Clarke's Commentary. New-York: Published by T. Mason & G. Lane, for the Methodist Episcopal Church, at the Conference Office, 200 Mulberry-street.

THIS commentary on the New Testament is now out, and ready for delivery, at \$6 retail, with the usual discount to preachers and wholesale purchasers. The Commentary on the Old Testament is in a course of publication, and will make three volumes.

The publication of Mr. Benson's Commentary has, we understand, been ardently called for, which induced the Agents to undertake it. Without obtruding any recommendatory remarks of our own upon the reader, we will refer him to the following testimonies in favor of the work, which we copy from the London "Youth's Instructor," namely:—

The Rev. Hartwell Horne, in his celebrated "Introduction to the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures," has observed, in reference to this production of Mr. Benson's pen, that it is "an elaborate and very useful Commentary on the Sacred Scriptures, which, independently of its practical tendency, possesses the merit of compressing into a comparatively small compass the substance of what the piety and learning of former ages have advanced, in order to facilitate the study of the Bible. Its late learned author was particularly distinguished for his critical and exact acquaintance with the Greek Testament."

The Wesleyan Ministers, assembled in their annual conference in the year 1818, passed the following resolution in reference to this Commentary:—"On the completion of this laborious undertaking, which was commenced at our request, and for the benefit of the Methodist Connection, the Conference feel it to be a duty to return their cordial and unanimous thanks to Mr. Benson for the service which he has thus rendered to our body; and to express their high satisfaction with the solid learning, the soundness of theological opinion, and the edifying attention to experimental and practical religion, which are displayed in this valuable work."

The Conference also, in their Pastoral Address to the Methodist Societies, in the year 1821, say in reference to Mr. Benson:—"By his various writings he has rendered great service to the connection, and to the truth of God; and his great work, the Commentary on the Old and New Testaments—a work replete with sound theological and critical learning, and admirably calculated 'to make the man of God perfect, thoroughly furnished for every good word and work'—will at once perpetuate his name, and extend his usefulness to future generations."

In the able "Sketch of the Character of Mr. Benson," drawn up by the Rev. Jabez Bunting, and inserted in the Wesleyan Methodist Magazine, it is remarked, "that the works of most permanent and general value, by which 'he being dead yet speaketh,' are his Life of Mr. Fletcher, and his Commentary on the Holy Scriptures."

Sketches of the Life and Travels of Rev. Thomas Ware; who has been an Itinerant Methodist Preacher for more than fifty years. New-York: Published by T. Mason & G. Lane. 1839. 12mo. pp. 264.

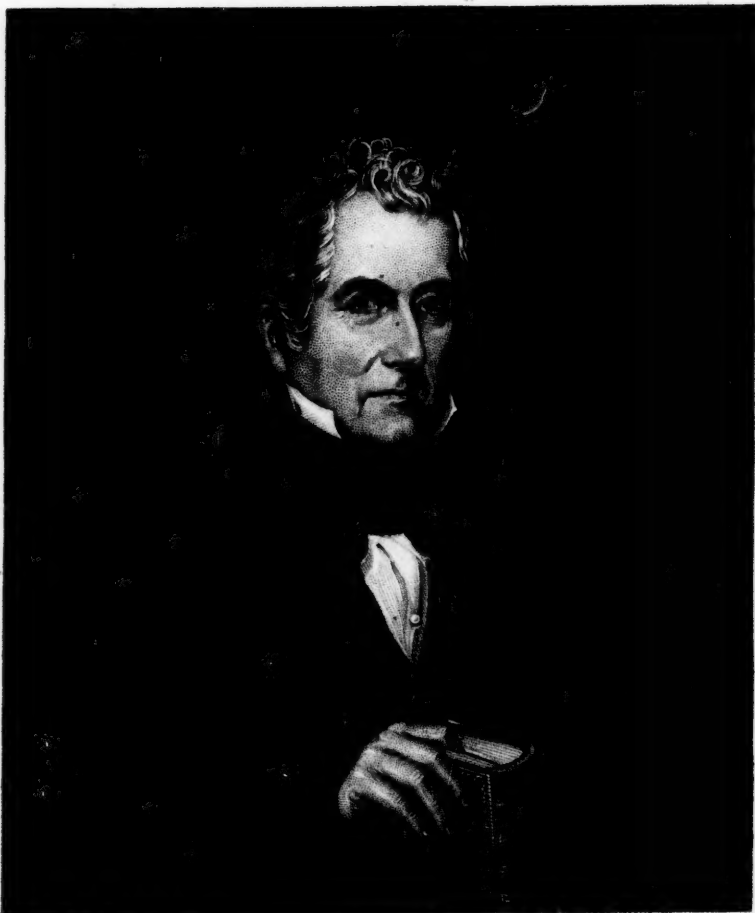
THIS work is now in press, and will be ready to order in a few weeks. The name of T. Ware has become familiar to the ear of every reading member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, as it has occupied a place in the general minutes since the organization of the Church in 1784, and for some time before. This circumstance alone invests the volume in question with an interest which will undoubtedly procure for it an extensive circulation. But we hazard nothing in saying, that this is by no means its chief recommendation. Mr. Ware traveled extensively as an itinerant preacher. Besides his labors in the Middle States, we find him among the pioneers of Methodism in the West and South, as far as Tennessee and North Carolina, and at the North and East, in Vermont, Massachusetts, and Connecticut. In the course of his labors in these sections, at an early period of the history of the Church, he was in a situation to make such observations upon the state of society, the measures pursued to introduce the gospel among the destitute, the manner in which Methodism and Methodist preachers were treated by the denominations who had obtained a footing in the country, and many other things connected with the progress of the work, as are calculated to cast much light upon the whole subject, and will serve the future historian a valuable purpose. All this he has done. His work abounds in anecdotes, historical sketches, descriptions of character, and incidents of various kinds, eminently calculated to illustrate the spirit and practical influence of Methodism during the period of his active labors.

We have no doubt that this publication will be sought with avidity, and read with much pleasure and profit by thousands who are enjoying the benefits of the institutions reared up and fostered by those fathers in the gospel who have gone to their reward, or are awaiting the bidding of their Master to enter into their rest in heaven.

A Letter to a Junior Methodist Preacher, concerning the General Course and Prosecution of his Studies in Christian Theology. By JOHN HANNAH. New-York: Mason & Lane, 200 Mulberry-street. 1839.

DR. HANNAH'S Letter to a Junior Methodist Preacher is formed on the basis of Mr. Watson's Theological Institutes, and gives ample directions to the student how to pursue the subjects embraced in that work to a still greater extent. In the first part of the letter the author directs the attention to the study of the evidences of Christianity. The next subject is the doctrines, the third is the duties, and the fourth the institutions of Christianity. Under each of these general heads reference is made to a great many very valuable works in divinity, with characteristic notices of them.

A Discourse on occasion of the death of the Rev. Wilbur Fisk, D. D., President of the Wesleyan University, delivered in the Greene-street Church, New-York, on the evening of the 29th of March, 1839. By NATHAN BANGS, D. D. Published by the request of those who heard it. New-York: T. Mason & G. Lane. pp. 24.



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of the Virginia Conference.

New York, Published by T. Mason & S. Linn, 220 Broadway Street.

